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ABSTRACT

This document contains the following nine essays by fellows in the Mid-Career Fellowship Program at Princeton University, New Jersey: (1) Promotion Processes at the Public Community Colleges of New Jersey, by Harvey Braverman; (2) Plagiarism in ESL Contexts at the Community College, by Barrie Chi. Contains eight references; (3) Partnership and Collaborations: The Changing Face of Writing Across the Disciplines, by Frances Davidson. Contains 24 references. Survey instruments appended; (4) Conservation and Environmental Studies at the Community College, by Daniel Flisser. Contains eight references; (5) Engaging the Silent Student in the Community College: Student Reasoning and Faculty Prescriptions, by Christine Holzer-Hunt. Contains 18 references; (6) Considering Culture in the Community College Writing Classroom, by Colleen Lineberry. Contains 27 references; (7) A Critical Report on Introductory Economics at the Community College: Leveling the Playing Field for Minority Students, by Paula Manns. Contains 84 references; (8) Perceptions of Academic Freedom in Literature Classes: A Case Study at Bergen Community College, by Sarah Markgraf. Contains six references. Research instruments appended; and (9) Encouraging Disagreement and Challenge Among Community College Students: The Intersection of Critical Consciousness and Multiculturalism, by Anita Rosenblithe. Contains 54 references. (NB)

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ISSUES OF EDUCATION AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

ESSAYS BY FELLOWS

IN THE MID-CAREER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JUNE 2003

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PROMOTION PROCESS AT THE PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF NEW JERSEY

BY

HARVEY BRAVERMAN, PH.D.,

Middlesex County College

The purpose of this paper is to share with you the different processes by which promotions are granted by the public community colleges in New Jersey. There are many similarities as well as distinct differences in the approaches taken by the colleges. Some have very clearly enunciated procedures, while others are quite vague. Some rely heavily on peer review for the recommendation whereas others grant most of the power to recommend to management designees. Some have a short time frame for the process, whereas others drag it out for almost two years. Some have clearly defined appeals processes, whereas others have only an informal one or none at all. The prerequisite time served in a position; the number of years of experience (teaching and other); the degree and credit requirements and their equivalencies vary; in some cases significantly.

The existence of the possibility of a promotion, with its rewards, both monetary and in elevated status, is a powerful incentive for a college to increase and enhance the quality of its faculty's performance that can only inure to the good of its students. I hope that this paper will give the reader a clear view of the alternatives used by others and perhaps some of them might be used to improve or enhance the promotion process at their college.

In my forty years as a member of the faculty, I have applied for and been promoted from instructor to assistant professor (not automatic with tenure), to associate professor and to full professor at a community college that is part of the City University of New York, being granted professor emeritus status when I retired. Subsequently, I began teaching at Middlesex County College as an instructor, being promoted to assistant professor after five years. I would like to describe the promotion process that existed in New York.

Promotion to Assistant Professor:

a) Eligibility:

1) 3 years as an instructor

2) Masters Degree or equivalent (obtained by the first of September)

b) Criteria:

1) teaching effectiveness

2) service to the department

3) service to the college

4) service to the community

5) professional development

A high level of achievement in each area required. (The criteria and examples of what constitutes excellence are in the promotion packet along with the application).

c) Application: A written application with separate sheets for each of the above criteria. On these sheets the candidate must describe his/her accomplishments, provide dates and the name of the person in charge of the activity. Written confirmation of the candidate's claims are to be attached when necessary.

d) Notice: The candidate must notify the Dean for Professional Personnel of their intention to apply for promotion by November 15. Completed applications with all documentation are to be submitted to the department chair by February 1.

e) Recommendation Process:

1) By mid-February, all the members of the department of rank senior to the applicant, plus the department chair meet to review the application. They vote by secret ballot on whether to recommend the candidate for

promotion. The department chair, if of higher rank, can vote. The chair prepares a memo with the recommendation and includes the results of the vote. It is attached to the application which is then forwarded to the college-wide Promotions Committee. This committee consists of three department chairs and three full professors chosen by the president of the college. This is an ad-hoc committee, chosen to advise the president. The term of the members is two years, on a staggered basis, with three new members chosen every year. The membership of the committee is announced before the promotion application is due to be submitted. Note: Department chairs are not part of management; they are elected by the tenured department faculty for a term of three years.

2) The college-wide Promotions Committee reads the application and the chair's memo, hears testimony from the chair, the dean of the applicant's division, and a person chosen by the applicant. This committee forwards its recommendation to the College Personnel and Budget Committee. The Personnel and Budget Committee consists of all the department chairs, the division deans and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. This committee reviews the recommendations of the college-wide Promotions Committee and forwards its recommendation to the president of the college. The president then presents his/her recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Before the president forwards his/her promotion recommendations to the Board of Trustees, the candidates who are not being recommended are invited to meet with the president to discuss the

reasons for their not being recommended. This meeting occurs in mid-June to early July. At this meeting, the candidate can try to change the president's decision. The president's promotion recommendations are distributed in writing to the faculty by September 1 and are effective at that time.

f) Monetary Reward: Movement to a lateral or next monetarily higher step at the new rank.

Promotion to Associate Professor: Essentially the same as for Assistant Professor, except a Ph.D. or its equivalent is required, and four of the five criteria must be rated excellent and growth through more important accomplishments must be noted.

Promotion to Full Professor: Same as for Associate Professor, except all five criteria are to show substantial growth beyond those of Associate Professor, and all five criteria are to be judged excellent.

The college had a student evaluation form given in class to the students to help in judging teaching effectiveness. There were no substitutes for a Ph.D. for Liberal Arts disciplines.

Equivalents to the Ph.D. were Ed.D.; Architecture: R.A.; Engineering: P.E.; Accounting: M.A. and C.P.A.; M.A. and ten years industrial experience at a high level, related to the discipline ("career" programs). Neither an A.B.D. nor a Juris Doctor was an acceptable equivalent.

What I did not like about this process was item 2, forwarding the recommendation to the College Personnel and Budget Committee. This was equivalent to the horse trading that goes on in Congress, especially with pork barrel legislation. It was unnecessary and often you were not judged on your merits. I also did not like the time frame of November 1 through July 1. It should have been streamlined to fit in one semester. The movement to a lateral step on the salary step scale meant no monetary reward for being promoted until the maximum on the prior rank's schedule was reached. This was unfair. Some monetary reward was needed. The rest of the process seemed reasonable.

For promotion at the public community colleges in New Jersey, I have compiled the following items:

1. Eligibility: includes degree/credit requirements, time in rank and number of years of teaching experience.
2. Criteria: teaching effectiveness, service to the department, service to the college, service to the community, and professional development.
3. Application: format and documentation.
4. Time from submission of the application to decision by the Board of Trustees.
5. Recommendation process.
6. Grievance process, (if any).
7. Monetary rewards, automatic promotion to higher rank when tenure is granted.
8. Education equivalents.

Thirteen colleges responded in a meaningful way. The results are summarized below:

1. **Eligibility**

	Instructor to Assistant	Assistant to Associate	Associate to Professor
Time in Rank (years)	0-5 (average 3)	0-5 (average 4)	0-8 (average 5.5)
Teaching (years) (2 yrs.high school = 1 year college)	2-6 (average 3.9)	4-8 (average 6.3)	4-15 (average 8.3)
Degree	MA	MA	MA-Ph.D
Credits beyond MA	0-15 5 require 15, 1 requires 9	0-45 4 require 30, 1 requires 45, 1 requires 18	0-50 2 require 0, 2 require 30, 1 requires 50*

* School requiring Ph.D. (2); second M.A. (3); A.B.D. (5).

2. **Criteria**

All require service to the department, the college and the community as well as teaching effectiveness and professional development. When the criteria were clear and specific, department service meant department committees, junior faculty mentoring, writing syllabi, evaluating textbook/learning aids and developing new courses and course materials. College service meant college-wide committees, task forces, recruitment and attendance at college functions. Service to the community meant student advising, being a faculty advisor to a student club and participating in off-campus events.

Teaching effectiveness meant classroom observations by peers and department chairs and the results of student evaluation questionnaires. Professional development meant

published research, writing textbooks, giving presentations at professional meetings and holding an office in a regional, statewide or national professional organization. Some schools have an extensive self-evaluation process and evidence of substantial growth in meeting the goals stated in the evaluation is required. One school assigns points to each of the criteria, with teaching effectiveness getting the most points.

3. Application and Format

Several schools have a carefully constructed and detailed application along with prompts that include some of the criteria.

4. Time from Submission of the Application to a Decision by the Trustees

This could be as long as two years at one school or as short as two months. The average (excluding the two year span) is 5.2 months.

5. The Recommendation Process

In each school, the president recommends the promotion to the Board of Trustees which has the final say as to who gets promoted. The process of how one gets recommended to the president seems to be of three distinct types. The first is all or almost all from within the realm of management. The second is one that is only from an elected faculty committee. The third is a sort of combination of the other two. For this discussion, I consider elected department chairs to be part of the faculty and appointed department chairs to be part of management. Two schools have a management only system and two schools have a faculty only system. The remaining

nine, have a hybrid involving both management and faculty at some point in the process. Of these nine, one seems to be faculty dominated and one seems to be management dominated with the remaining seven seeming to share the power equally.

6. Grievance Process

Almost all of the schools do not allow any appeal from a Board of Trustees decision other than what is stated as a general violation for cause. The rest are split with five having a process that allows for formal appeals at all levels, five having an informal appeals process to a management designee and three do not seem to have any appeals process whatsoever.

7. Monetary Rewards, Automatic Promotion to a Higher Rank When Tenure is Granted

The automatic promotion when tenure is given is almost evenly split with six schools granting the promotion automatically and seven requiring the faculty member to go through the promotion process. Monetary rewards vary. Ten schools have a modest fixed monetary amount for each new rank, one has a percentage increase in salary and two place the faculty on the next higher step of the salary schedule for the new rank.

8. Education Equivalents

Several imply waivers are available in certain "technical fields" at the discretion of the college. Some require credits plus a professional license. Two allow a second

masters degree to equal a Ph.D. or an M.A. and an M.F.A. Five allow A.B.D. to be equivalent to a Ph.D. Several allow a J.D., P.E., R.A. or C.P.A. to be equivalent to a Ph.D. Three have no equivalent to the Ph.D.

All the schools that I surveyed were asked to respond to what they liked most about their promotion process and what they liked least. These questions were asked of the faculty union president and of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The responses were that most were fairly happy and thought the process worked reasonably well. One responded that he felt that the union members on the promotions committee used their position as a "bargaining chip" during the years when contract negotiations took place. One stated that serving on the all faculty promotions committee was a lot of work, but very necessary as management could not be trusted to do it fairly. Two wished the Ph.D. was not the only criteria for promotion to professor. One was happy to state that in their just completed contract, the credits beyond the M.A. were eliminated for every rank except professor where a Ph.D. (and no equivalent) was put in place.

The response that the process worked "reasonably well" in my view does not imply that it is the best process and fairest to all concerned; the faculty, the college and the students. It means that they are used to the process and it is not so unfair as to warrant a strong effort to change it dramatically.

In my forty years as a college teacher, I have been promoted four times with a fifth time pending. I have gone through two different promotion systems and have heard from others about what occurs at their schools, and of course, the information I have gathered for this paper has made me quite knowledgeable about the promotion systems at the county colleges in New Jersey. Taking into account what a promotion system tries to accomplish, and for whom it should benefit, these are my views on a promotion system I would like to see instituted:

1. **Eligibility**

A masters degree in the field for ranks through associate professor. There should be a minimum of four years between promotions and the same number of years of teaching experience at the college level for each rank including professor. I do not believe there is any experience that is equivalent to college teaching other than college teaching. I also feel that there is no equivalent to the Ph.D. for promotion to professor. I believe that there is no equivalent to the experience of doing the research and writing the thesis for the Ph.D. If one is to be a COLLEGE PROFESSOR at the highest rank, one needs that experience which surely will benefit the students one teaches and the college one serves. There are so many alternate routes to the Ph.D. today that it is attainable in every subject area. Taking additional courses, getting licensed, etc. is not the same as getting a Ph.D.

2. Criteria

Teaching effectiveness, service to the department, college and community and professional development are fine. Clear definitions and examples of such items should be provided. If not in place already, a student evaluation of the teaching effectiveness of the faculty instrument should be created jointly by the faculty and the college's management; one that is carefully crafted to be fair to all and clearly appropriate at a county college.

3. Application and Format

A carefully laid out form with ample space, dates, committee names, the committee chair's name, etc. should be included. Letters attesting to the applicant's service should be encouraged. I found, after I was successful in my own quest for promotion to professor, that writing a clear, well done application is not necessarily a skill that many,(including those worthy of promotion), possess. A sample of a "winning" application should be given to each applicant.

4. Time from Submission of the Application to a Decision by the Trustees

I think the whole process should take at most one semester, preferably the spring semester.

5. Recommendation Process

I believe your colleagues know you best and your department peers can best evaluate your work. They and other faculty of higher rank would be my choice for who should

recommend me for promotion. That is, a committee of members of the applicant's own department of higher rank (including the chair, if applicable) should recommend the applicant to an elected college-wide faculty committee. Input would be allowed from the appropriate Dean or Division Head. The college-wide committee would be empowered to recommend those applicants it deems worthy of promotion in a written report to the president with reasons for recommending (or not recommending) provided for each applicant.

6. Grievance Process

A formal process for violation for cause. For those not recommended by the president for promotion, a meeting with the president and the applicant should be allowed so that the president can discuss with the applicant those deficiencies that caused the president not to recommend the applicant and ways to remedy those deficiencies.

7. Monetary Rewards

A percentage increase or dollar amount of a substantial size should be at schools without a salary step system in each rank. A lateral movement and then a movement to a higher step at the new rank for those with a step system. No automatic promotion upon achieving tenure nor for some longevity milestone should be in place.

8. Education Equivalents

Up to a point, to receive the most valuable efforts of a faculty member, the college should not place any unnecessary obstacles in one's path. A masters degree in one's field is needed for all faculty ranks through associate professor. Not requiring more than a masters degree for these ranks will enable the faculty member to focus their energies on teaching, professional development and service to the department, college and community. However, for professor in a college, I feel that a Ph.D. is required as I have stated in item 1, "Eligibility", the skills gained in obtaining a Ph.D. have no equivalent. These skills are what a senior member of the faculty should have and needs to have for the benefit of their students, colleagues and the college that employs them.

PLAGIARISM IN ESL CONTEXTS AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BARRIE A. CHI

UNION COUNTY COLLEGE

PRINCETON MID-CAREER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Plagiarism in ESL Contexts at the Community College

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Introduction:

During the past year, I have thought about plagiarism for many hours and I have equivocated greatly. My colleagues in the Mid-Career Fellowship program coupled with recent events have steered my thinking. I no longer believe that there is only one approach or a black and white policy objective. However, I have come to the conclusion that we must take a proactive approach in the matter of plagiarism. We must help our students, and specifically our esl students learn to produce work that is theirs and theirs alone. I still feel that we need to understand our students and work

from the premise that we can teach without indoctrination to enable students, particularly international students, to understand our culture and ethics. This can be achieved in numerous ways which I will attempt to list and elaborate on in this paper. We must help all our students

deal with the realities that confront them every day in the world of academia and the world at large.

Recently, in our college and specifically in my department, the question of plagiarism came up. It seems that with the advent of the Internet the problem has increased greatly. Many of the faculty feels that we need additional ways to deal with this problem. As a result, a new policy was formulated for the Institute of Intensive English, even though the college as a whole has a policy in place. I do feel that there are several, rather compelling reasons why all ESL students should not be treated alike with respect to plagiarism. I must emphasize here that I am talking strictly about the use of another person's words without proper citation. For the purposes of this project cheating on tests belongs to another category.

As teachers, we all have our favorite stories about plagiarized papers that we have gotten over the years.

Mine has to do with a Chinese student who wrote a "perfect paper." I knew without submitting it to Plagiarism.org or any other plagiarism detecting website that she could not possibly have written it. When I, rather gently questioned her about it, she vehemently denied getting any help at all. I knew at that point that I had to take some action but I was not quite sure what that would be. All of a sudden, I realized that she was good friends with the Chinese teaching assistant who I had worked with in China. He readily admitted, "helping" her with her paper. In fact, he said that he had shown her an essay his English teacher had written. He did not really expect that she would copy it word for word. When I met with her, she still insisted it was her work. At that point I told her that she would fail the course if she didn't submit a new essay. She didn't and she failed. She was the daughter of a high party official in China and believed that what worked in China would work here which is one instance of Cultural confusion or cultural expectations getting in the way of reality. In the May 17th,(2002) issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education Jiang Xueqin talks about a "culture of Copying." He says "for many years now in China, plagiarism among professors and cheating among students have been acceptable practices in a society that has shown little awareness of intellectual property-rights."

Another student, when asked to write an essay about the things she remembered about her city, Bogotá, handed in a travel brochure like description with phrases such as "This enchanting city with a multitude of sights and sounds can only be described by the words, magnificent and enchanting..." As I questioned the student about her essay, it became clear that, although I thought I had explained about using their own words, many Students just didn't "get it."

As a result of these "learning experiences" I have developed a new plan for Working with ESL students to attempt to help them understand how to write

using their own words.

Of course, Reading about plagiarism is quite fascinating. We all know about some of the most famous cases such as Doris Kearns Goodwin and Steven Ambrose and now Jayson Blair in the New York Times. However, that is not my concern in this project. I am particularly interested in plagiarism in cultural contexts and whether or not students whose native language is not English should be treated any differently than our own native English-speaking students. I realize that many of you will say, "plagiarism is plagiarism and that is all there is to consider. And, I wish that I could say simply that I agree or disagree but it has become a complex Issue for me and the more I think and read, the more dichotomous the issue becomes. In her very eloquent conclusion to her book "Stolen Language? Plagiarism in writing," Shelly Angelil-Carter says (p.113) " Also evident in relation to plagiarism, particularly where it concerns students using English as an Additional Language is the fact that all language is learnt and reproduced in chunks or formulas, so that phrases, which are, reproduced word-for word, or only slightly altered, may be a necessary part of the language learning process. Compounding the problem for these students is the lack of optional vocabulary and syntax available to them in their additional language when they are attempting to use their own words in paraphrase."

I have surveyed students and faculty on this issue and there seems to be several themes that emerge.

1. From some ESL faculty: Let them cheat, at least they are putting pen to paper.
2. From fifty percent of the students questioned: I have no time to do my own writing and if someone has already done it better what does it matter.
3. From other ESL Faculty: We must punish in order to protect and teach.

4. From the other fifty percent of the students questioned: We never had to do this in our own country, why should we have to do it here.

Given that we have varying opinions on the part of faculty and students, I have decided that the best way to proceed is to give my plan for helping students avoid plagiarism and some of my methods for achieving this. One of the most significant ways we can help our students is to" give them more words" by teaching them how to paraphrase. In teaching students how to paraphrase correctly we are giving students a way to manipulate words. This is a technique that is very important for native students of English as well as second language speakers.

So often ESL students reply when questioned about copying, that if an expert is writing with "good words" then why change them. However, teaching low-level students to paraphrase is an extremely difficult task.

This semester, I began a project with my level 2 students, which seemed to work quite well even though some of them reacted negatively at first. I prepared storyboards for each student in the class. Each board had a different very short story. Then I divided the class into groups of four students. Each student was given time to read his/her story. Then the students had to share their stories with their group. The students were instructed to ask questions of their group members. I moved from group, straightening out any difficulties or misunderstandings. After that, I asked for the stories back. The final part of this project involved the student writing his/her story in his/her own words. This was a difficult process for some of them and sometimes it was difficult for me as well. I had to decide just how much vocabulary help to give them. The results were, however, quite impressive given the level of these students word base. After this exercise, the students felt more comfortable with using their own words.

With upper level students the techniques for paraphrasing become more complex and more academic.

Some of the ways we can help them learn to paraphrase better is to teach them:

1. How to change parts of speech
2. How to combine or separate sentences
3. How to change word order
4. How to use different voice, or structure
5. How to use opposite expressions or perhaps negatives
6. How to make the best use of synonyms.

The next thing we can do for our students is to begin, at the very early levels, explaining about plagiarism, what it is and why we do not do it. One of the best ways to achieve this is to use examples of student's work. At

the same time there should be discussions about the penalties for plagiarism with justification given. It is extremely important for each upper level student to have a copy of the plagiarism guidelines in place at the student's college. One of our most important jobs is to instruct students in the proper method of quotation and reference citation.

We must also aim to give assignments which are both original and challenging but not so difficult that the student can't grasp the concept and thus must resort to methods that will lead to plagiarism. The portfolio

method of assessment, in place in many colleges encourages a continuum of development and allows the instructor to see the progression of the student. I was given some papers to review at my college in which the faculty member suspected plagiarism. However, reviewed in the context of his portfolio it was clear that this was not a case of plagiarism but of developing competence on the part of the student.

In addition we need to tailor our assignments to the level of the student. As I said earlier, if the student doesn't understand the assignment this has to lead to copying.

There are many valuable books and videos available for students of all levels on the subject of plagiarism, which I use when I teach writing. PBS programs are extraordinarily useful in this area and illustrate the problem vividly for the students. The use of multimedia with our students so often

Illustrates profoundly the ideas that we wish our students to grasp.

Teachers should also give frequent in class writing assignments which will give the student a chance to prove the he/she can write on command and can produce a piece of writing without the distraction of home and others.

In conclusion I feel that it is difficult, but necessary to teach students about plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. At a time when our society is so fraught with examples of unethical behavior and misconduct on all levels we must guide our students to adhere to standards of acceptable behavior as they move through their courses and work towards their goals. Although this process may mean additional work for us as faculty members it is necessary and hopefully rewarding in some or many instances.

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PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS: THE CHANGING FACE OF WRITING ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

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Mercer County Community College

Princeton University Mid-Career Fellowship Program

May 2003

Dedicated to Dr. Vera Goodkin, Chair
Writing Across the Disciplines
Mercer County Community College: 1979-1996

Introduction

For use in this paper, the terms Writing across the Disciplines (WAD) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) are interchangeable and broadly defined as:

> focusing on writing as an essential component of critical thinking and problem solving, key elements in a liberal education. If writing is a mode of learning, if it is a way of constructing knowledge, then the integration of writing with learning will continue, in one way or another, to be seen as a central feature of the learning process. The Boyer Commission Report, [1998] one of the latest policy documents from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, recognizes this fact in its recommendations for a new model of undergraduate education at research universities; one of its recommendations is that such institutions need to link communication skills with course work – a mandate for WAC if there ever was one. (McLeod, Miraglia 1)

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"What would it mean to look at writing across the curriculum (WAC) in a different way?" (Palmquist 373). "What does life long literacy look like, and how can we develop a curriculum that fosters lifelong literacy?" (Thompson 71). "... in what ways will graduates of our institutions use language, and how shall we teach them to use it in those ways?" (Russell qtd. in Reiss 74). These questions have motivated my research and study of writing across the disciplines on my campus, Mercer County Community College (MCCC), and across higher education at the start of the new millennium. Many faculties in American colleges and universities remain committed to the goals that inform most WAC programs: "... increased use of writing in disciplinary courses, increased exposure to the conventions and writing strategies employed in various

disciplinary communities, and support for faculty who express interest in using writing in their courses" (Palmquist 373). On my campus, we have made a strong commitment to writing as referenced in the oral and communication strands of the 1998 General Education policy and the support of the administration for the faculty chaired Writing Across the Disciplines committee. But since "Writing is a potentially powerful tool of teaching, as it is a tool of many modern systems of activity, but an immensely plastic tool that can be used well or poorly, for good or for ill" (Russell 261), I decided the time was right to research the current state of WAD and examine writing on our campus to understand and create a template for empowering a "new millennium" writing across the disciplines.

Since I was using my own campus as a microcosm of two year community colleges, I surveyed faculty and staff to determine how much writing is done in courses across the divisions; how confident faculty feel in integrating and assessing writing in their classes; what support, if any, is needed to develop assignments that use writing as a tool for critical thinking; and how the WAD committee on our campus could help achieve those outcomes. [See Appendix A] I distributed surveys to 480 full and part time faculty, including administrators and staff teaching as adjuncts, to compare faculty response to current research. I received 75 completed returns from 37 full time faculty, 28 adjunct faculty, 4 administrators/staff teaching as adjuncts, and 6 anonymous returns. I also sent the survey to a sampling of 9 community college faculty throughout New Jersey and received 7 returns. I was overwhelmed by the returns! It was as though faculty had finally been given a chance to say what they felt about writing, and they said a lot! Many were interested in creating the kind of writing environment described in the research as "... campus-wide recognition that writing is central to students' intellectual development and to their success in the wider world. ... writing is

visible, understood, and accepted as a valuable tool for teaching and learning across the disciplines. A campus-wide writing environment implies ongoing dialogue about writing and its relationship to thinking and learning among faculty as well as students, plus opportunities for faculty to exchange ideas and discuss issues in writing pedagogy. Finally, a writing environment necessitates a visible writing support system available for both faculty and students" (Barnett and Rosen 1-2). From increasing support for faculty development in areas related to writing and critical thinking to reconfiguring our way of looking at WAD as a committee that needed to focus on students as our primary beneficiaries, the message was clear: writing is essential to learning but cannot be separated from reading, content and communication, and must be supported through connections and partnerships between and among faculty, administration, writing and learning centers, technology, and most importantly, students. This focus on creating bridges across the disciplines and the divisions of the college echoes research that "Teachers who collaborate become active learners ... collaboration leads naturally into reflective practice. We evaluate what we have done as we tell each other about it" (Baron and Rambach 232). Many of the responses focused on student outcomes – helping students become better thinkers and writers – and in the words of one of the respondents, "Faculty development needs should be framed around how to optimize student performance" (response # 24). On first glance, this notion of faculty collaborating with one another, with staff, and with students, about teaching, learning, and writing, appears to give WAD a strong vote of support. But I knew the issues were more complex than that because from both personal experience and research, "Teaching effective writing is extremely complex because it involves the complexity of complex minds dealing with complex subjects. Effective writing instruction helps students understand that complex topics are worthy of study, that they [students] are

capable of studying complicated issues, and that they themselves have complex minds and therefore their writing is worthy of study by others" (Lafer 111.) What better description of lifelong literacy but how best to get there?

I began by looking at one of the two key components in the teaching/ learning equation: the faculty. Barbara Walvoord, one of the early leaders of writing across the curriculum from its genesis in the mid-1970's, argued in 1997 that "...assessment of WAC programs should honor this diversity of teachers' definitions of 'what works for them'" (Thaiss 308). Survey responses reported faculty using writing in all courses across the disciplines from journals, lab reports, article summaries, to essay exams, with a fairly consistent goal of " ... encouraging them [the students] to express themselves without self consciousness and fear of getting it wrong " (response #20). From mathematicians to scientists to architects, teachers valued development of analytical skills in their students: "... I explain that architects must compose well-written, logical and professional-quality proposals if they are to bring work into their office and pay the bills "(response #30). However, in terms of student outcomes, many teachers indicated that it was difficult to assess whether students had improved in writing, critical thinking, or analytical skills without a clear set of specific student outcomes to use as measurement. How to help them out? WAC theorists agree that it is difficult to "...measure a construct as complicated as writing ... [but] if we resist the urge to oversimplify, we can open up space to explore new methods of assessment and evaluation, methods that promise to contribute to a fuller understanding of what happens throughout our WAC programs" (Condon *33).* One such method, the constructivist model, involves stakeholders in setting goals and objectives as close as possible to the goals and objectives for the activity being evaluated. "If a WAC program seeks to increase the amount of writing students do as they move through the

curriculum, then a constructivist evaluation would seek to discover whether, in fact, students write more than they did before the implementation of WAC. ... rather than require students in a course to sit for a timed writing that at best is only tenuously related to their curriculum, data collection would entail looking at the products of their class work ..." (Condon 33-34). WAD can provide the forum, the research, and the connection to the English Department [See Appendix B] to support faculty in devising rubrics based on course goals and objectives, assess coursework based on those rubrics, and use feedback to improve instruction. Armed with this information, WAD liaisons (members of the committee who use writing to learn activities in their courses) can model these strategies in their divisions. Portfolio assessment, both written and electronic, can be used both during and at the end of a course, and ongoing classroom assessment strategies, such as those outlined in Thomas A. Angelo and K. Patricia Cross' *Classroom Assessment Techniques*, can provide immediate written feedback for evaluation and improvement.

However, changing the way faculty incorporate and assess writing in their courses involves resources, impetus, and initiative, as well as practice and time. The college's stakeholders – board of trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and students – have to place a priority on writing as a primary learning objective. Faculty need to lobby administration on their campus for a policy that requires writing throughout a curriculum, as was done on the MCCC campus with the aforementioned General Education policy. Administrative support for in house grants for pilot projects to plan writing enriched courses, devise assessment criteria, and integrate student outcomes into improving instruction is critical. [See Appendix B] WAD can be the catalyst for change, but significant movement towards campus-wide literacy can only be achieved with full support of the board and the administration.

The other side of the equation is the student. WAC research says that "... when instructors do not demonstrate that the writing is important by making it central to teaching and evaluation, most students do not involve themselves with it" (Russell 284); furthermore, "... we need to urge, encourage, and help them to experience their writing as a reflective medium that can deepen their understanding of a topic and our understanding of them. Such writing strengthens learning – and learners" (Watson 331). A shift in revisioning WAD is to look at the student as a primary or co-equal beneficiary. Through developmental portfolios and/or pre and post-tests, student writings need to be collected, assessed, and compared over a semester's time in order to evaluate the impact of writing on their growth as thinkers in their field. A twofold focus on faculty (and the courses and materials they design) and students and the "...effects a WAC curriculum has on [their] development as writers" (Condon 42-3) must occur. Additionally, at least 1/3 of survey respondents noted that students should be directly included as WAD's audience, either as participants in workshops, invitees to faculty/student discussions about writing, and recipients of one-on-one instruction in a writing (or learning) center. As one respondent noted, "What about sponsoring some activities for students, such as 'how do teachers evaluate your writing?' Why not publish some articles in the college newspaper about literacy, create posters to hang in the library and student center, and support the learning center in publicizing their services?" (response #14); and "... involve students more directly in the work of the committee through surveys or an occasional visit or presentation by students to the meetings of the WAD committee" (response #37).

Support for writing across the disciplines must also extend beyond the perimeters of the classroom. Of the 82 surveys returned, more than 1/2 believed that a writing center is critical for both classroom teacher support and one-on-one tutorial

tutorial instruction. A writing center, whether it is a part of a larger campus learning center or a separate center in itself, should be the visible focus for writing on a campus. Research says a WAC program working in conjunction with a writing center together can provide "continued focus on faculty training and outreach; additional focus on direct support for students; network technology support for tutors, teachers, and classmates; access to the World Wide Web to provide resource materials for writers and instructors" (Palmquist 378). Additionally:

> WAC programs and writing centers may host writing groups made up of faculty across the disciplines who are working on their own articles, grant proposals, or textbooks. These collaborations can provide rich sources for modeling how to respond to writing, for learning that writing is a complex activity, and for discovering that faculty do write differently in other disciplines ... Such public activities build a culture of writing and a community of writers while providing supportive resources. (Mullin 187)

An English Department faculty liaison with the Writing Center can provide the linkage between content area teachers, composition instructors, and writing center staff to ensure consistency in reaching college literacy objectives. [See Appendix B]

Qualified writing tutors should be available for student support and faculty contact within the center. "An effective outgrowth of both WAC and writing centers has been the tutor-linked classroom and the availability of tutors for writing intensive classrooms" (Mullin 189). Trained by the writing center staff, in conjunction with the English Department liaison, curriculum-based tutors can "... contribute some of the richest instruction to both faculty and students; they also provide the director of the writing center and WAC with disciplinary insight never gleaned without being in a classroom ..." (Mullin 189). An increasing range of technology is also transforming the delivery of

writing center services, including "... tutor linked electronic classrooms, to presentations about network researching, to the e-mailing of tutor reports and working with student papers online" (Mullin 191). Writing centers can also be partners in assessment. Tutors can be a part of the teaching-learning loop as they feed back to instructors difficulties that students may be having with assignments, thus demonstrating the " ... kind of assessment through feedback necessary to maintain the writing center - WAC loop" (Mullin *193).* Once the connection has been forged between the Writing Center, WAD, and the faculty, opportunities for programs can expand to the community to serve as "... community literacy centers, help not-for-profit organizations with grants, run workshops for businesses, or start writing centers in high schools and grade schools" (Mullin 194*).*

The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the University's *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities* includes among its ten recommendations four that are integral to WAD: remove barriers to interdisciplinary education, link communication skills and course work, use information technology creatively, and cultivate a sense of community" (Reiss 79*).* Clearly, WAD must forge links with the online campus community in order to bring writing online into the literacy loop. "... a new acronym, ECAC – electronic communication across the curriculum (Reiss, Selfe, and Young) – can be added to WAC and CAC (Communication Across the Curriculum) as another approach to literacy, communication, collaboration, and community outreach for educational programs and institutions " (Reiss 53*).* Campus WAD meetings can be supplemented by newsgroups and chatrooms, online courses can institute the same kinds of writing-to-learn activities that take place in the regular classroom, listservs can keep faculty updated on campus resources and writing research, links can be forged between the campus writing center and individual faculty

offices and classrooms: the possibilities are as limitless as the potential. The critical component: a committee such as WAD to act as the central communicating link for writing initiatives. As Barbara Walvoord, one of WAC's founders, notes (1996).: "WAC can no longer just introduce the idea of handwritten journals; it must deal with network bulletin boards, distance learning, and multimedia presentations by both students and teachers, as lines blur between writing and other forms of communication and between classrooms and other learning spaces" (Palmquist 380).

Conclusion: Recommendations for WAD in 2003

My research and an examination of survey responses endorse a Writing Across the Disciplines Committee on the community college campus in 2003. With commitment from administration to stand behind policy that supports writing and oral communication skills across all disciplines, a WAD Committee, chaired by a faculty member, can serve as the central clearinghouse for writing initiatives, including but not limited to the following:

- In house pilot projects, equivalent to one grant each semester, awarded each semester to plan and implement a WAD initiative. [See Appendix B]. Possibilities could include enriching a course to make it writing intensive; linking a content area course with an English Composition course; preparing a workshop presentation with faculty training other faculty with uses for writing in the classroom (response G); starting an exchange project/seminar discussion between a high school teacher and a college professor or a community college professor and a university professor exchanging places for a semester. [MCCC's WAD Committee recently ran a semester long program, "Conversations about Writing," with middle, high, and community college faculty meeting to discuss topics such as assessment, special needs, and cultural differences in writing. For more information about this kind of

collaboration, see Thomas C. Thompson's *Teaching Writing in High School and College, Conversations and Collaborations.*]

- Have WAD serve as the facilitator for a mentoring system in which a faculty member who is a WAD liaison (integrates writing into his/her course) is partnered with a faculty member interested in using writing more effectively. The WAD committee could train a cohort of WAD liaisons, in conjunction with the English Department (response 47);
- Partner with the English Department liaison and the writing center to discuss topics such as grading criteria and grammar. " ... if you help students understand how to use language appropriately for their specific writing situation, how to make editing an integral but not stifling part of their writing process, and how to understand the way language works in our society, then you are teaching 'grammar'" (Budden 83). Whenever possible, work collaboratively so as to dispel the notion that writing to learn activities belong only to the English Department.
- Sponsor one workshop a year based on surveying needs of a campus, partnering with a different department or division each time and with the Writing Center and the English Department. [See Appendix B]
- Showcase in house writers – students, faculty, and staff. Use the regular WAD meeting (or a special seminar session) to show writers in action and let students see faculty "... engaged in the mangle of practice as we work toward new understandings, some of which may eventuate in print" (Watson 332).
- Set aside a location, ideally in the writing center, to house writing resources for faculty and staff. Collect faculty portfolios of writing assignments for sharing, assessing, and improvement.

- Support the work of faculty in class with sufficient numbers of qualified tutors. Minimally, a writing center (or portion of same in a learning center) should have tutors available to work with students whenever courses are in session. Consider possibilities of in-class tutors, as well as peer tutors and writing fellows. [See Appendix B]
- WAD meetings – both in person and online – can continue to provide the setting for faculty discussion about writing as well as showcasing faculty initiatives with writing. "Seeing other teachers demonstrate what they do and hearing them explain why they do it always helps us to reflect on and clarify our own goals and practices. So even when we don't borrow each other's ideas, the process of sharing is instructive' (Callahan 212).

***

Writing Across the Disciplines, the committee, can be a place where teachers are willing to "step outside the comfort zone into arenas of discourse in which varied perspectives are aired and allowed to interact, clash, and modify one another ..." (Lafer 96), leading to positive change and growth in the way a campus community looks at writing. Art Young, one of the early proponents of WAC, wrote recently in "Writing For and Against the Curriculum" (2003) of WAC's future goals to:

> ... combine our teaching of composition and communication with essential democratic principles for the benefit of our students and our society; ... Make wise use of the new communication tools of the digital revolution; and build coalitions and partnerships across disciplines and into the larger community in support of literacy education and social justice in schools and workplaces, in shelters and community centers, and on our college campuses. (211-212)

Appendix A

Writing Across the Disciplines Survey

Directions: Please answer the following questions, using additional paper or attachments as needed for responses.

1. How much writing do you expect students to do in your course(s)? What minimal levels of writing do you expect of your students in order to master your subject? Are students making progress as writers in your course? Why or why not?

2. What support do you need (if any) for designing writing assignments that promote higher order thinking skills? What support do you need (if any) in assessing student writing? If such support were more readily available, would you incorporate more writing within your course(s)?

3. Could you use faculty development in any of the following areas as they relate to impact on students' writing performance:

- students with special needs;
- students who are non-native speakers of the English language;
- students who have weak foundation skills in writing.

4. In light of the college's most recent (1998) revision of the General Education policy, what changes in the curriculum have you introduced in order to include writing in your course? If none at all, please describe why. If yes, please describe how.

5. If you could link your course with a writing course, for example, English Composition I or II, would you? Why or why not?

6. How can Writing Across the Disciplines (the committee) work with faculty initiatives such as online courses in which the primary means of interaction is writing?

7. Is a Writing Center critical to your students success as writers? Why or why not? Be specific.

8. How can a committee like Writing Across the Disciplines serve both faculty development and student performance outcomes?

9. Is encouraging dialogue and support for writing in your classroom important enough to be formally structured and institutionally supported in a campus wide committee such as Writing Across the Disciplines? If so, in what form or shape should Writing Across the Disciplines return to our campus at the beginning of the fall 2003 semester? If not, why not? Be specific with any suggestions for the committee's growth and change.

Appendix B

A Proposed Annual Budget for a Writing Across the Disciplines Committee

Administration/Curriculum Development

- Release time for WAD Chair (one course release time/ two semesters): $3000.*
- Release time for a liaison between the English Department and the Writing/Learning Center (one course release time/two semesters): $3000. *
- One in house grant each semester for 1-2 faculty members to initiate a writing across the disciplines curriculum (grant to be awarded by the committee): $6000.*

Materials/Resources/ Development

- Books, outside materials to supplement work of the committee $300.
- One workshop each year to address special topics:
  in house resources $200.
  outside consultant $800.
- Curriculum based tutors from the Writing/Learning Center to support writing across the disciplines initiatives:
  Professional tutors @ $11.00 hr.
  Five hours wk. X 15 wk. X two semesters $1650.**

*Approximate cost of course coverage.

**This amount separate from the cost(s) of running a fully staffed writing center on campus.

Total Annual Operating Expenses for Writing Across the Disciplines Committee: $14,950.

Note: Release time figures may vary based on an individual institution.

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Appendix C

Alternative

A Proposed Annual Budget for a Writing Across the Disciplines Committee

Administration/Curriculum Development

- Release time for WAD Chair (one course release time/two semesters): $3000.*
- Release time for a liaison between the English Department and the Writing/Learning Center (one course release time/two semesters): $3000.*
- One in house grant each academic year for 1-2 faculty members to initiate a writing across the disciplines curriculum (grant to be awarded by the committee): $3000.*

Materials/Resources/Development

- Books, outside materials to supplement work of the committee $300.
- One workshop each year to address special topics:
  in house resources $200.
  outside consultant $800.
- Curriculum-based tutors from the Writing/Learning Center to support writing across the disciplines initiatives:
  Professional tutors @ $11.00 hr.
  Five hours wk. X 15 wk. $825.**

*Approximate cost of course coverage

**This amount separate from the operating costs of a fully staffed writing center.

Total Annual Operating Expenses for Writing Across the Disciplines Committee: $11,125.

Note: This alternative budget reduces the in house grant expenses by $3000, with an accompanying reduction in the cost of curriculum-based tutors.

Release time figures may vary based on an individual institution.

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Conservation and Environmental Studies at the Community College

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Conservation and Environmental Studies at The Community College

Among the numerous roles of the community college, a commitment to environmental conservation is frequently overlooked. Such a commitment can be manifested through the lens of the college mission, and implemented in formats varying with the foci of diverse factions of the college.

The public face of the community college is displayed in at least three areas: (1) academic offerings, (2) "co-curricular" activities, and (3) in its community outreach. Considering the college's role in local leadership, a notion of resource conservation should underlie these three functional levels. A fourth, and internal arena in which these values may be practiced is in administrative decision-making.

Objectives

In proposing solutions to these concerns, this paper seeks to carry out several objectives. A brief historical background will be presented, describing the multi-faceted nature of environmental conservation. Such a cross-disciplinary perspective will dispel the commonly held view of environmental concerns as being restricted to the domain of the natural sciences.

A review of the scientific origin of environmental concern will be complemented by a review of the crossovers between environmental study and the fields of literature and art. The overlap of environmental concern into socio-economics will also be discussed.

Lastly, this paper will propose several methods of incorporating a sense of environmental stewardship across the various objectives of the community college. Primary among these methods is an outline for developing a program in environmental studies at Camden County College.

Scientific basis for Environmental Studies

The academic disciplines recognize the inter-related nature among the Life, Earth, Physical, and Chemical sciences. Based upon the mutually overlapping qualities of these fields, the study of Ecology was devised in the nineteenth century as a means to unite the fields of natural science noted above.

Frederick Clements proposed this new science in his *Phytogeography of Nebraska* (1898) and drew on the Greek term "oikos," meaning "house." The concept suggested that just as a house unites its inhabitants, so too would the study of

"Ecology" include the myriad forces contributing to the inter-relations among living things and their biotic and abiotic environments.

Contemporary Ecology examines chemical interplay among organisms in the maintenance of their discrete populations; physical reactivity to solar radiation; the spatial pressures on the architecture of structural forms; and the geologic influences on biogeography and community distribution. Clearly, there is considerable overlap of the life sciences into other natural sciences.

Overlap of Environmental Studies into Literature

A prime force in shaping environmental concern into a political movement was an individual who straddled the worlds of science and humanities. John Muir, often credited as the originator of the conservation "movement" in the late nineteenth century dispelled any notion that biology and esthetics might be mutually exclusive.

Emerging from a deeply religious background, Muir saw living organisms as "nature's gifts" to be treasured, nurtured and preserved. Additionally, Muir drew on his artistic interests in producing a series of sketches in which he recorded the diversity of life and the forces of nature acting upon it.

Finally, Muir invoked his literary talents in the "service" of his environmental cause. In books, essays, and even in his recently published letters (Gisel, ed., 2000), Muir superimposed an element of carefully written prose describing his interests in environmental conservation. In doing so, he was an early contributor to the "nature writing" literary mode.

This tradition was continued in the twentieth century by additional scientist-authors who highlighted the urgency of natural resource protection. Also Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* (1949) was a year-long journal of changes in the natural world in annual cycle. His emphatic plea for preservation has placed his book into the core of American literature.

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1964) reviewed the ominous chemical shadow hovering over natural systems, resulting from insistent herbicide use. Combining scientific background with objective case studies, this too has become a part of American literature.

Environmental Art & Architecture

Environmental art seeks to improve our relationship with the natural world. It is often ephemeral and arranged for a specific site. These presentations are generally based on a collaboration among artists, scientists, educators, and community groups. Environmental art offers new interpretations of natural forces and connects human

experience to the natural environment. These scientific factors must be appreciated as a pre-requisite for artistic interpretation.

Contemporary architecture seeks to integrate aspects of the natural environment with structural form and position. Landscape architecture, in particular highlights botanical features in such a way that an esthetic appeal is offered. The architect may draw from an array of floristic elements including ornamental value, the highlighting of local flora, the emphasis on particular taxonomic groupings, or other focal points which serve to incorporate the botanical composition.

Socio-Economic Connection with Environmental Studies

At the socio-economic level, environmental preservation takes on its most political form. Questions of monetary sources of clean-up funds, environmental toxins located in low-income neighborhoods, or the extra costs to shrimpers using "turtle exclusion devices" have economics and social stratification at their bases.

Contemporary sustainable development advocates have meshed economic development with resource preservation in such a way that places developing nations at the forefront: As these countries begin to institute transportation and energy infrastructures, they have a unique opportunity to implement resource-preserving technologies.

Community College Commitment Toward Study in the Environmental Sciences

Having established the multi-disciplinary nature and contemporary relevance of environmental science, it is important to underscore the value of its presence in a two-year college curriculum. This may be a novel concept in that most community college programs are vocationally oriented. In the Biological sciences, this is played out in terms career programs in the health sciences.

Still, at the community college, we are interested in integrating students into the mainstream of educated and upwardly mobile society. In order to function as productive members of society, we'd like to see our students imbued with in a basic understanding of environmental sciences. This will give them the opportunity of intelligent decision-making in civic matters such as landfill management and municipal water treatment. Issues relating to natural resource preservation will be better understood as well. Such controversies include the provision of "wildlife corridors" through urbanized areas, maintenance of genetic diversity, and use of herbicides and insecticides on public lands.

It is important to raise these topics to a priority status in community college divisions of Science and Mathematics. Laboratory courses in the environmental sciences ought to be oriented such that students can internalize the information into their daily lives, and adequate academic credit should be awarded.

As laboratory courses, considerable practical and applied experience can be gained in both field and laboratory situations. Since it is generally accepted that community college students learn well under applied conditions, emphasis can be placed on such areas of practical significance.

Collaboration with Local Agencies

In New Jersey, the practical component of such courses can be developed in conjunction with a number of local agencies. These organizations serve as valuable resources complementing the academic mission of the college. Nature preserves and conservation centers may accommodate student internships and independent study opportunities. Institutions such as the *Pinelands Conservancy*, the *Wetlands Institute*, and the *Camden Aquarium* may provide teaching and research facilities which broaden the instructional program in place on the college campus.

Collaboration and coordination with these institutions, and involvement with local agencies converges toward indicating to students, administrators, and trustees that environmental education is an important matter of local concern.

The college itself is obliged to take steps toward allotment of funds, indicating its commitment to education in the environmental sciences. These allocations may be directed toward course and faculty development; and the acquisition of laboratory instrumentation and ecological field monitoring materials.

This equipment varies in its level of sophistication from laboratory and field-based devices, including growth chambers and field monitoring equipment, to traditional methods such as plant presses, which have remained essentially unchanged for centuries. Outdoor plots of land may be utilized as garden sites, and, if space allows, interpretive trails may be implemented though wooded regions.

Course Development

Academic course and program development may be initiated with the establishment of several laboratory courses in the Biological sciences. Ecology, Field Biology, Botany, and Organic Garden cooperatives can be offered as alternatives to the standard Introductory Biology courses taken by health science majors. These courses would also be of interest to Liberal Arts students interested a broader scope of Biology.

The concept of "environmental literacy" was has recently been proposed as the need to incorporate aspects of environmental study across the curriculum (Collett & Karakashian, 1996). The concept is commendable but its application is difficult. Still, an overall trend in favor of environmental study may support development of these courses.

It will be important for administrators to recognize the value of allowing significant flexibility in the establishment of these new courses. This versatility may entail a smaller than normal class size until the courses are well established, and an initial outlay of funds for laboratory equipment. Administrators are encouraged to see the foresight in offering these concessions. Just as students and instructors are asked to "step out of the box," I would implore administrators to do the same.

A novel effort at encouraging community support may be the provision of garden plots available to staff and local residents. Such a project has been successful at Mercer County College.

Environmental Audit

In October 1990, a group of university presidents from across the globe met at the Tufts University European Center in Talloires, France, to discuss their roles and affirm their support for sustainable development and benign environmental management. The *Talloires Declaration* indicated their concern for the unprecedented scale of pollution and environmental degradation. *(http://www.unesco.org/iau/tfsd_talloires.html)*

In a comparable manner, the community college administration may manifest its commitment by conducting an "environmental audit." This internal assessment serves to evaluate the quality of environmentally-relevant maintenance activities. With an eye toward innocuous environmental impact, water use, refuse deposition, recycling of paper, metal & glass containers, and landscaping methods may be monitored over a period of time. Techniques are analyzed, and recommendations are made for improvement.

The first environmental audit of this nature was initiated at Tufts University and detailed by Sarah H. Creighton in her publication, *Greening the Ivory Tower* (1998). Comparable audits have since been implemented at the University of Pennsylvania, and other colleges and universities, large and small. Such a project would be unique at a New Jersey community college, and would require commitment from administrators, freeholders, maintenance and students.

Development of an Environmental Studies Program at Camden County College

Based on a sense of the educational value of the study of Environmental Sciences, the following proposal is offered as the basis for development of an academic program in this area. The suggestions traverse the various factions of the college, and ask for participation from the areas of academics, administration, and land-use planning and facilities management.

The components of this proposal will ultimately converge toward establishment of Camden County College at the forefront of ecological education at the level of the two-year college.

Course Development

Courses in organismal and ecological biology serve as the basis for a program in environmental studies. As alternatives to classes in Introductory Biology, the following courses would provide students with the basic tenets of a conservation ethic: Botany, Aquatic Biology, and Ecology. Additionally, topics such as ethno-biology, conservation biology, and landscape architecture serve to round out the program and add vibrancy to the primary course material.

Independent study programs can fill in gaps among the courses suggested. At Camden County College, an Organic Garden project has been running as an independent project for two years, providing students with a basis in sustainable development and resource conservation.

This can be augmented by a floristic documentation project, seeking to identify the particular species occurring naturally within the 300 acres of woodland on the college campus. Carried out during spring, summer, and fall semesters, and over the course of several years, such an independent study project would demonstrate that Camden County College is ideally situated for the study of conservation in a suburban context.

Current faculty have indicated a willingness toward the development of such courses, and Teaching Fellowship funding is available for work on this project. Once the courses are in place, both science and liberal arts majors are likely to enroll.

Environmental Studies is a very broad field, and extends beyond the natural sciences. The economic, social, and political implications of the hand of humankind in the environment are clear, and are often controversial. In addition to courses in the natural sciences, elective courses in areas as diverse as philosophy, economics, and sociology would appropriately fill out a course of study in this program.

Funding Sources

The development of these courses will require additional laboratory instrumentation. While the college has indicated a willingness to underwrite such purchases to a limited degree, it is hoped that outside sources may provide additional monetary assistance.

Several agencies functioning within the umbrella of the National Science Foundation offer funding of instrumentation, course development, and participation in faculty workshops. The *Course, Curriculum and Laboratory Improvement* (CCLI) and *Advanced Technology Education* (ATE) are among these units. The NSF has funded various community college initiatives, and it is hoped that the organization could, in part, fund some of the components of an environmental studies program.

The National Education Association provides funding for projects highlighting and focusing on local institutions. Discussion has begun with the NEA regarding development of a community landscaped garden project at the Camden County College urban satellite campus. It is hoped that such a project will generate enthusiasm among the students enrolled at the downtown campus and will contribute toward rejuvenation of an inner city site.

Landscape Planning

In conjunction with a landscape architectural firm, Camden County College has been developing a broad plan for grounds and facilities planning. The objectives include the integration of local flora into the landscaping scheme, as a means to highlight botanical species native to the deciduous forest biome. Planning committee members represent various segments of the college community including, students and faculty.

Construction of a greenhouse is a possible component of this plan. Addition of such a facility would be a very positive step toward development of an environmental science program at the college.

Advisory Board

Considering the vocational goal of many community college students, an advisory board will be established. Composition of this panel will include local employers, representatives of the county municipal utilities authority, and staff members of state parks and conservation centers. These individuals will serve as a means of connecting the academic program to the local environmental and economic concerns.

The adjustments and modifications offered by this group will ensure that the perspective maintained by the environmental studies program will remain current and responsive to regional and local concerns.

Overview of a Plan for Environmental Studies

The convergence of academic planning, the ability to secure funding sources, campus landscaping, and associations with relevant agencies and potential employers, will bring about establishment of a strong program in environmental science.

Observations of comparable programs at neighboring colleges, and establishment of a series of progressing benchmarks will provide a framework for development of an environmental studies program. With an inherent flexibility allowing inclusion of new courses and internship opportunities, the program will be locally relevant. These qualities will attract the interest of those seeking employment with an associates degree, those interested in completing a bachelor's degree, and those interested in the attainment of knowledge.

A Community College Partnership for Environmental Studies

As the environmental studies program becomes established, connections between the college and neighboring institutions can be arranged. With a focus on educational excellence, Camden County College will be poised as the focal point of a partnership through which workshops, presentations by specialists, and comparable innovative programs may be offered. A consortium such as this can provide internship opportunities, employment listings, and co-curricular experience.

The co-curricular experience may include field trips, non-credit workshops and other experiential activity enriching the academic program. The *Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education* (ANJEE), developed in 1985, may provide a model for a partnership of this sort *(http://www.anjee.net)*. A community college partnership for environmental studies would coordinate numerous activities outside of the formal educational program.

Conclusion

Development of a program in environmental science is consistent with the general mission of community college. In an effort to provide quality educational programs of local relevance, inclusion of this program among the college offerings serves to broaden the academic directions which a student may follow.

It is somewhat unconventional, and may stray from the beaten trail at a two-year college level. Yet, at a large institution such as Camden County College, it is not

uncommon to find a small number of students whose academic interests and individual perspectives and sensitivities separate them from the traditional students. An environmental studies program can retain those students, as well as provide a broader background in organismal biology for liberal arts students.

The presence of an innovative environmental studies program may also catalyze students and faculty to recognize the cross-disciplinary nature of the field. In a geographical region in which habitat destruction continues at an accelerated pace, it is incumbent on those with accurate information to distribute that knowledge. As seeds are broadcast over a field, so must the details of the multi-faceted discipline of Environmental Study be disseminated.

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Engaging the Silent Student in the Community College

Student Reasoning & Faculty Prescriptions

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Students often come to our community colleges unprepared for what college *can* be. I ask my students, every semester, what they think that the college experience is supposed to be. The most common assumption that they arrive with is that college is a "*13th grade*". Many arrive unprepared for critical thought, self-discipline for study and homework, have little notion of what will be expected, and have no knowledge of critical or inquiring classroom discourse. Many of these new students become silent contributing little to and taking little from the classroom experience.

What are the reasons that students become and remain silent in our classrooms? I asked this question using a survey comprised of ten (10) New Jersey community colleges, thirteen disciplines (13), 763 student responses, and an average class size of twenty-five (25). Half of the respondents[1] were first year and half were second year students. The survey was anonymous and administered by the instructor[2] in each class. The survey question was, *"Please list any and all reasons why you do not participate in class"*. I have identified nine categories from those responses for student classroom silence.

The most common reason for silence was students not wanting to be perceived by instructor and peers as making a mistake. Much of their learning and growth is inhibited by these fears. As our student populations change, as students are disengaged, and as the least advantaged and the surging immigrant populations fill our classrooms, among them will be many silent students.

The following reasons are given by students for being silent.

Fears of Intimidation by Peers & Lack of Self Esteem 42%

Our students said, *"I'm afraid of being wrong; of looking or sounding stupid; of breaking the silence; and of intimidation by classmates*. One student wrote, *"We created this atmosphere of insecurity, and I'm not sure if it can be averted."* This reason for silence category had the highest percentage of responses and was closely tied to responses that indicated a self-identified lack of self-esteem and self-identified shyness.

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[1] . Class subject areas that were surveyed included, Art, Biology, Philosophy, Mathematics, History, English, Creative Writing, English as a Second Language, Music, Nursing, Economics, Theatre Studies, and Academic Learning Strategies.

[2] Colleges that participated were County College of Morris, Atlantic Cape Community College, Bergen Community College, Raritan Valley Community College, Middlesex Community College, Union County

Three quarters of the students who said that they had a fear of being wrong; of looking or sounding stupid; of breaking the silence; and of intimidation by classmates also indicated that they were "*unsure of their own opinions and judgement*". Several students stated that *"no one really cares what I have to say."*. Another responded that they *were "embarrassed by the opposite gender."* And one reply said, *"I'm afraid of appearing smart"*.

Hostility toward Academics or Instructor 14%

These respondents stated that they did not want to be in class at all, or in college, nor in that particular professor's class and they found silence (or disruptive behavior) as a way to retaliate and as a control mechanism. They said, *"I came to class to be entertained, so why should I participate?"; "Why should I waste my time and valuable energy by participating in class?"; "If I don't like the professor, the class or the required subject matter, I give the Professor the silent treatment in retaliation."* ; *"The only reason I'm in school is because my parents said I have to be, I really hate school"*.

Student Exhaustion 11%

This portion of the responses indicated exhaustion as the reason for lack of class participation. They cited exhaustion from competing responsibilities *"motherhood, work, caring for parents, illness* and *depression*".

Each semester I ask students in each of my sections to write down how many hours a week outside of classes they work. Many of our students work 20 to 60 hours a week in addition to attending our colleges. They do not appear in my 8:30 AM class wide-awake and eager to hear my lecture.

Lack Of Preparation & Lack of Vocabulary 10%

In this category, students wrote many comments similar to the following; *"I don't know the proper knowledge or the correct terms"; "I do not know the vocabulary needed to speak about the topic"; "I have no knowledge of subject matter itself"; "I have no*

College, Mercer County Community College, Camden County College, and Brookdale Community College. The survey was administered during October, 2002.

training in discussion and debating behaviors in the classroom." In some of these cases, the student may not have done preparatory reading or homework.

Intimidation by Instructor 8%

These students stated that the teacher made fun of the answer or the student, or embarrassed them in some way. These students were hesitant to repeat the experience, and said that they chose silence, "*even if they knew the answer*". Student responses included: *"Instructor gets very angry at me"; "Professor puts me down"; "Professor will embarrass me"; "Professors are pompous and intimidating."; " Professor makes me uncomfortable when I give the wrong answer"; "Teacher intimidates students."; "Professor thrives on position of authority and loves to put students down."; "Some professors are so caught - up in themselves that they do not even notice when a student raises their hand."; " Teacher makes fun of us or makes us look like idiots if we get the answer wrong."; "Professor acts like the answer and I are insignificant." ; "The professor humiliates and belittles me."; "I was told not to ask any questions by some professors."; "Teacher has no idea who we are."* I was appalled by these responses.

Lack Of English Language 5%

These students stated that, "*English is my second language*"; "*I have language barriers.*" and "*I do not have the vocabulary.*" These students indicated that they were unwilling to speak because they did not have a sufficient command of English language vocabulary to enter into a classroom discussion or even to answer a direct question from the instructor.

No Comprehension of What is Going On In Class 5%

"I do not know what is going on. The only thing that registers is what is written on the board." was a typical answer in this category. Some wrote simply, *"I have no idea what happens in class."* and *"I don't understand what is being taught in class"*.

Professor Does Not Engage the Class 5%

This category concerns the instructor's delivery, the subject content, and the length of the class. *"Professor speaks in a monotone."; "Classes are too long."; "Professor does not care enough about the lecture and topic to put any energy into their teaching."; "It is so boring that I'm busy doing other things like text messaging a friend or making a cell phone call."*

Miscellaneous Other Reasons Given for Student Silence 1%

Other students were quite direct, citing "*laziness*" as the reason. Some cited "*silencing by the compulsive communicator*". Others wrote, "*Classes have too many students in them, I would have to shout*".

After recording student reasons, I began a search for remedies. Some were suggested by readings, others came from peers and colleagues. They follow.

Fears of Intimidation by Peers & Lack of Self Esteem

Inviting students to be willing but safe participants in the incredible world of discovery requires work. Setting a "safe" classroom tone becomes a new challenge every semester. The persons being taught are as important as the material being taught. Many times as instructors, we assume three things; "*the presumption of an audience; the presumption of ignorance; and a presumption of a shared identity*"[i]. These shared identity assumptions may include; "*...common language...cultural heroes, popular tastes, everyday customs and conventions, all of which enable people to feel at home and to behave understandable within a specific cultural context.*"[ii] While these assumptions may have been true in the past, they are not necessarily true today. Community college students are diverse in every way, and we can not assume that we know who they are. By learning who they are we can start to create a learning atmosphere where they may be encouraged to risk enough to stretch and grow.

In addition, a course structure of cooperation (rather than of competition) can create a group where an individual student can feel respected, free and motivated to maximize contributions. McKeachie[iii] suggests that instructors need "*the ability to see subject matter from the perspective of a student, flexibility in ways of conceptualizing*

subject matter, commitment to the field, nurturance and willingness to listen and learn from students."

These silent students are trying to avoid many risks, including the risk of thinking out loud. Enroute to critical thinking, we can try to assist them in wanting to think out loud. A simple nod of agreement, combined with a smile can do much - and so can an enthusiastic "*Good! Great! or Yes!*"

I know of several admired and excellent instructors who incorporate a paragraph or two about their desired classroom atmosphere in the course outline that they distribute to students. These teachers begin the creation of a safe classroom at the very first class meeting. At every opportunity they impart a feeling of professionalism combined with caring about the students that have been entrusted to them for learning. They encourage each student by name, to contribute to the classroom discussion, after they have set a tone of order, of care and of desired discussion outcomes in each and every class session. They tend to learn what the goals of their students are, they indicate willingness to assist the student, to assist as facilitators for further education, and are clear in stating their expectations for behavior and learning in their classrooms. Additional suggestions by colleagues are:

- Set a "*Safe*" classroom tone to assist with prevention of intimidation by peers. Other students would not be permitted to laugh, snicker, or make faces while other students speak.
- Set a class atmosphere that is non-punishing.
- Validate difference of opinions.
- If a student hesitates in response to a question, try not to put students on the spot. Ask if it is OK if you call on someone else and return to that same student later, during the same class and ask if they can add something to a topic that you are sure they are knowledgeable about.
- Ask student to let you know during the first day of class if they are uncomfortable about participating or reading aloud in class.
- Give written "*informal*" assignments that prepare the student for a discussion based on what they write. Many quiet students spend time revising and reflecting on the writing and feel more prepared for the discussion.

- Announce on both the syllabus and verbally, on the first day of class - that verbal participation is required, if it is.
- Ask each student in row "*one, two, three*" to go to the board and write a question about the material for the day. About ten questions at a time will appear on the board for class discussion.
- Always call on students by name.
- Invite the student to "*step out of the box*" and "*be a leader*" by speaking during discussions.
- Break the class into small, circularly shaped, discussion groups for 10 minutes at a time - each with a discussion leader.
- Measure student comprehension through verbal and written quizzes.
- Create a question that requires a verbal answer from each student.
- Conduct a survey that requires each student to give verbal input.
- Ask the silent student to meet with you in person after class, and voice your concerns about lack of participation.
- Use open-ended questions[iv] to stimulate thought and interest, arouse curiosity, develop student confidence in expressing themselves, determine progress in the class, reinforce points, and evaluate student preparation for class. See Initiating Questions and Continuing Questions in the Endnotes.
- Use e-mail to discuss classroom contributions with students who may feel "*safer*" and more protected using this mode. Some shy students are reluctant to ask or answer questions to the instructor directly; this can provide a communication ground where you can work toward in-class participation.

Silence and Silencing as a Means of Control

Kevin Leander[v] in a 10-month ethnographic study of a high school history classroom describes silencing as a "*negotiation of power*". He says that student can use this power on either side of the communicative equation, or it can be used against the instructor. He goes on to elaborate, giving us two key processes for the creation of social spaces for silencing. The first he calls "*social scenes through talk*" and the second, "*producing embodied spaces*". Social scenes through talk is " *talking over another,*

raising one's volume, interruption and criticism all appear to be obvious processes by which one interactant silences another." The production of embodied spaces, he says are: "*the movement and coordination of group formations to create physical space relevant to floor management and control, as well as microlevel individual movements, such as gesture and gaze*". He goes on to propose that "*teachers and students may powerfully use nonverbal communication (e.g., eye gaze, gesture, and posture) to secure speaking rights*". This reading caused me to reflect on what we might be doing as instructors, inadvertently or purposefully, to silence our students using nonverbal suggestions. Might I be giving a nonverbal silencing clue?

The reading also gave extensively diagrammed classroom seating dynamics. In samples of different classroom seating formations, several differing silencing situations occurred. These diagrams and study details showed how groups of students were able to control the topic of the classroom, use gender silencing techniques, and also shows how the "*qualities*" (tone and volume of voices, position of bodies in relationship to speaker, position of heads in relationship to speaker) of any classroom scene determined the wielder of power in that scene.

His study noted that "*the silence of certain students during discussions (that) puzzled me as much as the relative garrulousness of others ...were a relatively stable group of 5 or 6 friends (who were) overwhelmingly silent within classroom discussion.*" Leander speaks extensively and with diagrams and data, of how boys in the classroom used overlapping and simultaneous speech; suppression of backchannel talk; pointing over one's shoulder at the speaker; volume and tempo; exchanges of gazes; and of upper body and head positioning. All of these devices served to keep these 'silent' girls from participating in classroom discussions.

He tells us that this is the boy's ability to destabilize the classroom space and to produce 'silenced positions' in the girl students. He also proposes that seating positions in the classroom are a student negotiation of social spaces, i.e., the boys could "*close off*" the narrative social space of the girls as a group, or individually by means of the devices listed above.

Although I had not specifically sought out this perspective in my research, this article brought me to look at the 'student chosen' seating arrangements within my own

classrooms during the past semester. I perceived groups of students who were "*closing out*" the voices of some of my silent students. I very roughly diagrammed the seating and the pattern of discourse and silence that followed, in a manner similar to the diagrams in Leander's study. I noted that some of the patterns could be changed by means of an instructor led change in the student seating. This was an interesting and new way to look at the patterns of student speaking and student silence.

Silence and Hostility toward Academics or Instructor

When individual students or groups of students use silence as a controlling retaliatory means, the remedy needs to shift back to the instructor . Are the rules too rigid in the classroom, leaving no room for student opinion at all? Is the instructor using intimidation or insulting behavior, or perhaps responding to students as a person instead of as a teacher? If the student is in the classroom solely to satisfy a parental requirement, time can be set aside to have a one-on-one conversation with the student. Many of our students have parents that are too busy to be available to them.

Perhaps the student needs to be referred to a counselor, or another professional. This situation can hold true of a sullen or an aggressive student; the internal student feelings may be the same, despite the outward appearance. Again, time aside with students can benefit the instructor, the class and the student in unpredictable ways.

Lack Of Preparation & Lack of Vocabulary

Curiosity, it is said, is an important motivation for participation and learning. I must refer here to McKeachie's *Teaching Tips*, particularly when he states that "*asking students questions ...not only improved learning but also increased interest in learning more about the topic. But the most successful questions were those that were most unexpected*".[vi] McKeachie continues, "*Perhaps instructors offer too few opportunities for students to experience the thrill of discovery*". He also offers us this, "*Complexity can also arouse curiosity*". Keeping this in mind, we also need to ensure that we give problem solving that is within our students potential. We set them up for failure if we set goals that are unreasonable. The fine point between stretching student potential and goals that are unachievable can be best ascertained if, again, we know who our students are.

Each semester, I must learn who they are, once again. Even after a short summer away from campus our students change and grow.

One of the techniques that colleagues suggested was listing the 'vocabulary of the day' on the whiteboard for every class session, putting it within easy reach of the student who just can't remember the right words. This is a useful and practical use of the whiteboard, and appropriate vocabulary posted along with an outline of the class plan can assist in the flow of information within each learning opportunity. There is no magic remedy for those students who show up for class unprepared, several instructors suggested that an unprepared student is, in reality, absent. Other suggestions were:

- Provide student examples of responses to topics on the board.
- Ask how the student relates to the discussion topic - how a parallel can be found in something that the student has familiarity with.
- Provide appropriate subject area vocabulary and/or definitions on the board, as a handout, or via other posting means.

Student Exhaustion

Since most of us attempt to make our classes as interesting as possible through variety of instructional techniques, the best procedure for dealing with students who sleep in class (after speaking with them individually about it) may be to include your lecture content in the tests that you give. Although this paragraph addresses those students who may doze during class, it also applies to those who chat, work on homework for other classes, instant message on their cell phone and the like. Exhausted students, along with these others, may tend to think that there is little point in being awake or attentive for your talk if your lecture information is not contained on a test (written or oral). According to McKeachie[vii] "*This will be true of the most interesting lecture*". We can tell students that the lecture materials will be on tests even before we begin to speak, and remind them that note taking will improve test results. One suggestion was also made to initiate "seventh-inning-stretch-breaks" held within the classroom, every half-hour.

Intimidation by Instructor

Mercer County Community College provided an excellent resource for this point. An article in their *January 2003 Three-Point Oral Communication Checkup*[viii] covered three destructive instructor communication behaviors. "*Verbal aggression includes, but is not limited to, direct attacks, insults, malediction or teasing. Although instructors may not see themselves as verbally aggressive, students may have different opinions... an instructor may think that a sarcastic comment is humorous and harmless. However the student may ...feel 'hurt, embarrassed, humiliated or uneasy' in front of his or her peers.*" The article indicated that, " *Verbal aggression can damage a student's self-concept, can harm the classroom environment, and decreases attendance and class discussion*". This, however, does not mean that we should be doormats for aggressive student behaviors. The article offers helpful guidance in this area. *"There are many times when assertive behaviors and language are necessary to control individuals or an entire class. When these moments occur, ask yourself if you are being assertive (positive, firm) or aggressive (negative, hurtful). The line is thin between the two behaviors, but the difference in student perception is enormous.*" This thin line can also make the difference between student participation and student silence.

Lack Of English Language or American Culture

"*Deep structure of ways of living, such as cultural values, beliefs and norms are woven in the talk in which we engage in our everyday lives.*"[ix] Yin speaks in his article about the ways in which a "*facilitating discussion*" (as opposed to an expressing opinion type of discussion) might not be comfortable with those who were brought up and who lived most of their lives, outside of the culture of mainstream America. One of his examples cites the difference between German truth, or "*wahreit*" and how a German student might perceive the three main characteristics of American discussion as; "*a) openness to consideration and discussion, b) openness to disagreement and c) a lack of resistance.*" The perception by the German student in this study is that the American does not tell the "*truth*" in this type of discourse, because Americans "*seem to hide (their) real opinions*".

This is but one cultural view of how our conversations may be perceived by those

from other countries, and gives me pause for thought as more students from eastern Europe and elsewhere enter our classes. Some instructors tell their classes that "*Each person in this classroom may perceive what I say very differently from the person sitting next to them*". This can indicate to the student listener that the instructor has an awareness that "*one size does not fit all*".

Another type of situation that falls into this category are those students whose family of origin speak multiple languages, often within the same sentence, in the home. Studies[x] of "*family members' beliefs about the importance of language and specifically, the social significance they attach to the uses of Spanish and English in daily life*" show results that have significance for instructors at community colleges. These studies indicate that choices of schools for these children and choice of languages spoken at home in these families are a conscious decision for both cultural identity and earning potentials. In many cases parents and children in Spanish-English speaking families ask questions and respond to them in sentences that are half English and half Spanish (these are known as Code switches). One student in a study contained in *Language as Cultural Practice* replied to the questioner; "*Yo quiero* talk more *en espanol po que ese es mi* background *y* that's it"[3]. This was an example of an explicit link between language maintenance and cultural continuity.

Parents in this study also often choose primary and secondary schools based on a desired cultural identity, often favoring Spanish over English speaking student populations because of the wish for a strong cultural identity. The study indicates that these families know that a literate English speaking child may earn more money in the long run, but feel an overruling need for Spanish cultural identity. Nilda, one of the adults interviewed in the *Language as Cultural Practice* studies said, *"well - the world that we learned gets you ahead is an alien world. And is a non-family world."*

The authors of *Language as Cultural Practice* found that *"...good teachers are ...cross culturally sensitive..."*. As educators, an understanding for this desire to preserve cultural heritages can assist us in instructor-student conversations. Colleagues offered the following suggestions in this area:

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[3] "I want to talk more in Spanish because it is my background and that's it."

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- Examine and evaluate your teaching style. Creation of an active learning environment that is effective with a wide variety of student cultural styles increases student interest and engagement.
- Get written, oral, anonymous or personal feedback from students, faculty or groups on the kinds of students we have failed to engage.
- Seek out conferences, workshops[xi] and seminars on teaching in diverse and multicultural classrooms.
- Create a faculty support group for the exchange of ideas and solutions

No Comprehension of What is Going On in Class

Aside from testing student comprehension through frequently administered quizzes, that may identify a "lost" student, the instructor can:

- Provide historical background information during class (on the board) to *"bring the class up to speed"*, prior to a topical discussion.

Professor Does Not Engage the Class

Most instructors know that their own enthusiasm is a basis for motivation and student interest in learning. What we may not be aware of are things such as facial expressions, animation or lack thereof, vocal intensity monotone speaking and/or frequent use of "*um*". We can best see if any of these things apply by arranging for a videotape of our classroom session. Other suggestions by faculty peers were to:

- Ask silent students to bring in extra credit articles to share with the class.
- Ask silent students to assist another student.
- Assign student role-playing based on the classroom topic, where each individual student assumes a specific role.
- Tell the class that we all benefit from what each of them have to share on a specific topic.
- Pair "*response partners*" to come up with answers together before a discussion.
- Do not show media without sound in a darkened room.

Conclusion

As we encourage our silent students to participate, we help students to grasp content and meaning that is beyond their normal and accustomed modes, develop new insights, learn to persuade the reader and listener and bring vitality to our classrooms. This is a life work, not a one or two semester "patch". May we each leave the legacy of on our own passion for learning with all of our students.

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[i] Philip W. Jackson *The Practice of Teaching*, 1st Ed. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1986, p.21

[ii] Philip W. Jackson *The Practice of Teaching*, 1st ed. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1986, p.22

[iii] McKeachie, Wilbert J. *Teaching Tips*, D.C. Heath and Company p. 253

[iv] Students who do not have practice in answering instructor questions can be led to develop answers to open-ended questions. The use of Initiating questions in increasing difficulty and then use of Continuing Questions can build answering skills.

Initiating Questions
(presented in order of increasing answering difficulty)

Leading (Agreement/ Disagreement)	This pattern is asymmetric isn't it?
Selective (Choice)	Is this a post-industrial or an industrial time frame?
Parallel (Additional information)	What else might that philosophy suggest to you?
Constructive (Specific New Information)	What kinds of words do you find in this reading, and what mood do they evoke?
Productive (General New Information)	What English laws did the creators of the Declaration of Independence use?

Continuing Questions

Redirect	Right! Would anyone else like to add to that answer?
Rephrase	Can you put your answer in another way?
Prompt	You're on the right track - can you keep going? Did you leave something out?
Clarify	Can you help me understand your point a little better?
Elaborate	What else? What can you add to that answer? Tell me more. How does the idea that ____apply to _____?

[v] Kevin Leander, *Silencing in Classroom Interaction: Producing and Relating Social Spaces*, Discourse Processes, 34(2), 193-235

[vi] McKeachie, Wilbert J. *Teaching Tips*, D.C. Heath and Company, p.223

[vii] McKeachie, Wilbert J. *Teaching Tips*, D.C. Heath and Company, p.192

[viii] Rocca, K.A. (Spring 2002) *Verbal aggression in the Classroom*. Communication Teacher, 16(3), 3, 15.

[ix] Yin, Jing, *Telling the Truth? A Cultural Comparison of 'Facilitating Discussion' in American Talk*; Discourse Processes, 33(3), 235

[x] Schecter, Sandra R. & Robert Bayley, *Language as Cultural Practice, Mexicanos en el Norte*, Erlbaum, 2002

[xi] Morris County College has initiated Diversity Seminars for faculty, with a paid stipend for attendance.

Considering Culture in the Community College Writing Classroom

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Submitted to: Professor Theodore K. Rabb
History Department
Princeton University
Mid-Career Fellowship Program
May, 2003

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Deep[2] Autumn,
My neighbor,
How does he live, I wonder? ---BASHO

On the first day of the semester twenty students sit in front of me, several with foreign dictionaries in hand. This composition class includes students from Serbia, China, Pakistan, Haiti, Brazil, Puerto Rico, America, and during discussion, I become aware of family backgrounds, reasons for attending college, writing experiences. This mixture of cultures is typical of my community college classes.

The results of the 2000 census show that the U.S. population is becoming increasingly diverse, and that more than one in seven children between the ages of 5 and 17 speaks a language other than English at home; more than one third of them are of limited English proficiency (Educational Research Service, 1995; National Center for Ed. Statistics, 2000;Villegas, Lucas, 20).

What are the implications for teaching writing with an increasingly diverse population? Creating opportunities for all learners is relevant and essential. A classroom setting where students can examine and express unique identities, where every student feels accepted, capable, and respected is necessary for students from any culture.

Certainly one way to address this issue is to provide teacher training to increase awareness of specific cultural tendencies and communication patterns. One interesting illustration of how to offer cultural insight, for example, is that part of the preparation for foreign language interpreters at the United Nations includes learning proverbs of the foreign language they will be translating (Samovar, Porter, 37). Since culture is a dynamic concept, a complex frame of reference of shared patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, attitudes, norms, symbols, and meanings in a community (Ting-Toomey,10), foreign students may encounter many challenges in the classroom. While typical cultural characteristics include differences in fashion, food, music, & other elements of pop culture, like an iceberg where we see only the tip, deeper cultural layers reside below the surface, which often influence people's thinking and behavior. (Ting-Toomey,10).

A large body of research on intercultural communication also exists. Hofstede's examination of value orientations (1980), such as students'preference for a structured classroom, or working collaboratively or individually, as well as research indicating cultural values placed on orientation toward time, activity, relationships, concept of human nature (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck,(1961), Kluckhohn and Kohl, (1996) will certainly affect approaches to learning. Anthropologist Edward T. Hall has also examined cultural differences in perceptions/views of reality in messages, organization of time, and more(Hall 1990).

Furthermore, Robert B. Kaplan's study (1966) on cultural thought patterns sheds light on the nature of rhetoric, indicating that cultural differences provide the basis for learners' responses in communication, especially writing. Kaplan examined linguistic systems in foreign student compositions, which revealed that logic (in the popular sense

of the word) evolves out of culture, therefore, thought patterns also vary from culture to culture. Each language and culture has a unique paragraph order, so part of learning a particular language is the mastering of its logical system (Kaplan, 14).

Recent research by Professor Geneva Gay, in "Culturally Responsive Teaching" (2001), presents other ways to attend to diversity, including the development of a Cultural Diversity Knowledge base for teachers, which offers detailed particularities, preferences regarding teacher/student interaction, implications of gender role socialization and more. Zieghan(2001) and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995), also suggest techniques ways to foster inclusion and culturally responsive teaching. All of this is valuable information as long as teachers take care not to stereotype.

However, after almost twenty years of community college teaching, I have learned that the more we are different, the more we are the same. While a knowledge base for teachers, intercultural communication information, multicultural readings, and more are useful ways to promote cultural awareness, if all students feel included and respected, if their learning experiences have personal relevance and meaning, they are likely to feel part of an authentic learning community and feel free to express unique identities, and engage in meaningful learning.

This paper offers examples of specific successful lessons from my writing classroom at Brookdale Community College where I teach composition, creative writing, basic writing, research writing, and literature. While these strategies are specific to my composition classroom, many can be adapted for any classroom by providing brief opportunities for freewriting and discussion at the beginning of each class.

Create Opportunities for Inclusion

One lesson I've used on the first or second class of a semester requires only 20--30 minutes and provides opportunity for individual expression, dialogue among students themselves, and large group discussion. In a composition class, of course, extension of any of these short writings, can be developed into a longer paper.

First, I describe culture in broad terms and ways to consider culture, "...not just the culture of our native country, but the culture of community college students, for example. Consider belonging to a culture of a baseball team, nurses and hospital workers, or people who live in Monmouth County."

After listing possible cultures students have offered, I ask them to be aware of all the "cultures in our classroom", as we briefly write about our experiences. I list the following ideas; students choose one for freewriting:

1 Name and describe at least one (1) or up to five (5) places you've lived.
2 Describe a game you played as a child.
3 Describe any school experience you remember.
4 Describe a toy you had while growing up (use specific details).
5 Describe a tradition from any holiday, celebration, or family gathering.
6 Describe some unique characteristics of any culture you belong to.

After about 10--15 minutes of writing, students share what they have written in pairs or groups of three. At first they seem shy, then friendly toward one another. In the large group each person reads or tells a little about the descriptive pieces.

A Haitian student describes her country where there are many colored flowers everywhere. In her neighborhood in Haiti people talk, laugh, shout and you can hear them outdoors in the sun. She misses the noise because in Eatontown, NJ it's very quiet; people stay inside much more.

An American student describes living in Point Pleasant, NJ near the ocean and beach, and how he feels moving to Manalapan, NJ. He misses the smell of the sea, the feel of the wind, the sound of sea gulls.

In one class students type these brief sketches. One young woman writes:

The first place I lived, where I was born was a small town in Siberia, the east part of Russia. The name of the town was Sangar. I lived there til three years old. In Winter I had to put on three pants and two sweaters and of course a fur coat and fur boots. But in summer I swam and sunburned at the shore of a local river.

Another student writes:

I come from Poland and I lived in a small town where everyone knows each other. It is very beautiful place, very quiet and colorful during the summer. There are small lakes and mountains with green fields at the bottom of hills. This place makes me feel good and lets me dream. Two years ago I decided to move out and come to New Jersey. This place gives me bigger opportunity for the future, better school and job. It's more crowded and noisy.

Another writing choice describes a holiday or family tradition.

Being from an Italian family, cooking fish in my kitchen is the highlight of every Christmas holiday. We continue this tradition every year. Everyone has a job, and my girls, my husband, my mother and brother gather and cooking begins at 7:00 a.m., frying zeppolis with powdered sugar. The hot oil splatters the stove and white counters. Cleaning shrimp and opening clams at the sink for the fish stuffing is time consuming, but later in the early afternoon we pick on shrimp cocktail while we work. We fry calamari by setting up a table in the garage and placing the flour-dipped fish in the deep fryer. It takes two weeks for the smell to go away...

Brief writing sketches, such as these, provide an opportunity for students to share information about their own culture if they choose to. All can participate when they realize culture can be very broad. Most times I ask students to read at least a few sentences aloud. By doing this, each has a chance to see commonalities and differences,

express individual identity, and contribute to the classroom community, thus, feeling included and connected to the group.

Other students describe childhood games, another universal experience that lends itself to telling personal stories. One student writes:

A game I made up in my childhood was "Viking Club", which had five or six members. We would ride our bikes one and a half miles to a beach we called Cliffwood and a long pathway we called Bikers Hill. We always had to ride down it to prove our toughness. I stumbled the first time, but then I conquered the hill. The others fell 20 feet into the ocean. We collected dirt samples and bugs, shells, and whatever we could get our hands on and brought them to the treehouse laboratory. In the summer we'd attempt to sell lemonade or water for money to fix up our treehouse.

And another:

My friends and I played hide and go seek after dark every night in the summer. My friend Roger had a big field behind his house, overgrown with tall weeds. We all had flashlights that could only be used after the person who hid his eyes had counted to twenty, and then we'd blink them on and off to give clues and distract the one who was it. I remember random trees in the field, too and sometimes we'd ride Roger's red go-cart right through the grasses, pressing them flat wherever it made a path.

While students hear one another's samples in groups of three, one person's story will often remind another person of a similar experience, which fosters friendly conversation and a common bond. Students express unique game experiences, but all have something to offer. Also, students hear various styles of expressing thoughts on paper, which encourages creativity and embraces difference. It also offers students other possible topics for later in the semester.

A school memory is another writing idea. This student writes:

I remember when I was five years old; there was an end of the year show in kindergarten called the kindergarten/sixth grade circus. There was a small performance for the school and one for the parents on a humid June night. All the girls wanted to be ballerinas, but everyone couldn't, so I had to be a tightrope

walker. At first I was disappointed, but one of the narrow side-seats in the gym was the tightrope, and I remember my mom taking me to Macy's to get a pink leotard with silver glittery hearts and a pink tutu. My sister did my hair in curlers and beads. The makeup on my face was bright blue eyeshadow and red lipstick. I probably looked more like a clown than a tightrope walker, but I felt gorgeous.

In this excerpt the student describes the disappointment and excitement she remembers in that moment, even from fourteen years before. Many students might have experienced similar feelings in similar or different situations, so they can relate to the person, no matter what the culture.

Encourage Student Choice and Opportunities for Personal Relevance

Other ideas I've used where students choose from a broad topic and find personal relevance and meaning, include:

****Jot down something you are passionate about. If you could spend time doing whatever you wanted and get paid for it, what would it be? Describe this activity in detail and why you love it so much.**

** Describe traditional foods served at weddings, christenings, holidays, birthdays, etc. in your culture. (You can include the recipe later)**

** Describe a family joke (one that is re-told over and over) or funny moment you or your family experienced.**

****Describe something you've lost (it could be a person, your sunglasses, a place waiting in line, etc.)**

****Recommend something interesting you've read (article, book, story, etc.), seen (t.v., film, real life experience) or heard (CD, speech, live music, song) that was memorable for some reason.**

** What is a story you told or a story told to you as you were growing up? Choose one and briefly freewrite out the details as you re-tell it.**

** Describe a time you were surprised. Consider the word surprise very broadly…a surprise party, you may have been surprised that something turned out differently than you expected, you won something, etc.**

**** Describe a good thing that's happened to you in the last two weeks. Where were you? Who else was there? What happened?**

**** Describe someone's kitchen in detail: a relative, a friend, a neighbor, your own (see detailed lesson below).**

Writing about someone's kitchen, for example, lends itself to describing cultural particularities, if desired. In this assignment, students include what might be cooking on the stove, sensory details, who might be there, even recipes. For this assignment, I simply listen and acknowledge the use of specific detail in the writing. One student writes:

Depending on what time of day it is, you can always smell an aroma of something: sausage cooking on the stove or muffins or a cake baking in the oven. My Grandmother's kitchen is alive with bright pastel colors and pictures of fruits and flowers all over the room. If you are hungry, there is always something she has just cooked on the table and my grandmother in her blue apron, will sit down to visit when you come in...

And another:

My mother's kitchen smells like onion, garlic, fresh basil and tomatoes, simmering in a big silver pot. I love when she makes marinara with shells and serves it in the colorful pasta bowl. We grate locatelli cheese on top and finish it off with garlic bread. The kitchen table is a long wooden one, and usually there are six or seven of us seated for dinner.

Again, as my students share stories with one another, the personal commmonalities among them become evident. At the same time, they are engaged in what they write because they choose it; they are connected to it. Ultimately, because they care about the subject, they improve writing skills, while they have an opportunity to learn more about one another and a wide range of diverse experiences.

Other Assignment Ideas

Another assignment I like to use early in the semester involves writing about and to an ancestor, based on an adaptation of an idea from Writing Toward Home, by Georgia

Heard. Heard writes, "What was it like for my paternal grandfather to fly an early plane with linen wings and to be one of the first to discover how to loop in the air after his friends had tried the loop and crashed and died?... For my maternal grandmother to have married four times, the first time at sixteen?" (100).

I read this excerpt to my students asking them to describe one of their own ancestors, choosing someone they know very well (or know about), using details to show who that person is: personality traits, looks, the life he/she had, one specific example or a moment from that person's life.

After a 1 page freewrite, students share in groups of three. We listen to samples aloud from volunteers such as these few lines: **"I can picture my grandfather's red plaid shirt and the expression on his face as he chopped wood in the yard and carried it in big armfuls to make piles on the side of his house..."**

Next, students write a letter to this ancestor, as if actually sending it to the person, working in the descriptive details as much as possible. They often ask questions or tell the person something about themselves and their own lives. One student writes:

Dear Granny Sophie,

I have good news for you. Hussein asked Aida to marry him. They are still in Canada, but Granny I am so happy for you. You have always prayed this day would arrive soon. Finally your prayer has come true. Mammy will send an invitation for you and Grandpa to come. Since your green card expired a while ago, you guys need to go to the American Embassy to renew it. Auntie Hannah will take care of it, but I just wanted to remind you....

And another:

Dear Grandpa,

I always wished that I could have known you because Dad has always told funny stories about you and things you did. I know your dad had speakeasies back when alcohol wasn't allowed. How was that? Dad tells me that you had a 1950 yellow and white Chevrolet and you sold the car with over 250,000 miles on it. That

is cool that back then you got a car to last that long, but after all, you did keep up after it. You showed Dad a lot of useful things that he has showed me, so I will know how to maintain my cars in the future as well as now...

I find that students really connect to this short assignment (1—2 pages), often including it in their final portfolio. This offers the foreign student (as well as any student) another opportunity to reveal unique characteristics of his/her own family background.

Another successful assignment enables students to share favorite music and song lyrics. During class, as preparation, I play several selections of my own favorite story-songs, including Billy Joel's, *Scenes From an Italian Restaurant*, Bob Dylan's, *Tangled Up In Blue*, and Loreena McKennit's, *Night Ride Across the Caucasus* . I provide printed lyrics as students listen, then ask them to choose interesting lines, copy them onto paper, and freewrite from that point, inventing a story, explaining their choices, or anything else. Students write about a page and share with partners first, then listen to other samples from volunteers reading aloud to the class.

For homework students choose meaningful song lyrics from *their own* favorite music, replicating what we did in class, but building this into a longer essay or fictional sketch. This student's choice reveals a very personal, poignant response about the death of a friend:

***"Everytime you think of me just close your eyes and picture me rolling"* Tupac Shakur**

This is from a west coast artist known as Tupac Shakur. It means a lot to me because it's a quote engraved on my best friend's gravestone who passed away November 24, 2001 at age seventeen from a heart attack in his sleep. Mike always looked on the bright side of things and it seemed as if nothing bothered him. He took each day as it came to him. I think of him and close my eyes and know he is happy where he is. He wouldn't want anyone to worry or think otherwise. Tupac Shakur was the same way. He spoke his mind, not worried about the consequences or scared of what would happen, he also took things day to day, even though the way he passed was different than Mike...

What is useful in this assignment, again, is that students can choose from something important in their own lives and find a personal connection. When students share what they've written, all can participate by expressing individual preferences or ways that they relate to the common language of music.

A natural follow-up to this lesson is to use poetry in the same way. I read one or two poems during each class throughout the semester for students to hear different poetic voices. Two great resources are Bill Moyers, The Language of Life(1995), as well as Poetry 180, edited by National Poet Laureate, Billy Collins. Both include poetry that is accessible for students, much of it from contemporary poets from all over the world. When students are expected to listen to the poems, rather than analyze them, they begin to notice the sound and variety of language, subjects, and poetic form presented in unique ways.

Later in the semester, as students have become comfortable this wide array of poetic expression, I present a poetry lesson where students can actually hear poets reading their own work. I use *The United States of Poetry,* 1996 (video/text available, also), created as a collaborative project by Blum, Holman, Pellington based on 13,000 miles of travel in the U.S. A. to find places where poetry *lives*. It features the work of contemporary poets from nobel laureates to rock n'rollers to rappers. (Another wonderful resource for this assignment is **Poetry Speaks**, edited by Elise Paschen and Rebekah P. Mosby, which includes three audio CD's of great poets reading their work).

As I play audio selections on a CD boom box, I provide the students with text from poems such as, *Democracy*, by Leonard Cohen, *Change*, by Quincy Troupe, *How Do I Love Thee*, by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and a few others, while students listen to the

different styles and voices. The CD also includes "found poetry" including cheerleading chants and double-dutch jumprope rhymes, which I also play. Students then choose a line or two, (similar to the song lyrics exercise) from any poem and create a fictional sketch, a personal memory, or anything that the lines trigger .

The next step is to find a poem of choice for homework, copy it, choose a few significant lines, and create a short (2 page) piece of writing that somethow relates to or came from the poem. This always offers opportunity for students to find something personally relevant, as well as the notion that poetry is an interesting form of expression that comes from everywhere.

Another successful assignment, (adapted from Heard's Writing Toward Home), is based on the idea of the Spanish word *querencia,* describing a place where one feels safe or comfortable. The verb *querer* means to desire, to want, and the idea is that each of us has a place or activity that could be considered "a wanting place" where we feel good and where our strength of character comes from. Some enjoy city streets, the beach, a room in a house, the sound of the wind, a certain time of year, or even dancing.

After introducing this, I usually read Georgia Heard's description of a bullfight, where she explains how the bull wants to find his querencia, a position of strength.

> When the gate to the ring opened, the beautiful, confused bull burst in like the wind, radiating power as he circled amid the shouts of the spectators. The matadors hid behind walls like scared children, studying the bull carefully. The banderillero approached on his horse and pierced the bull's neck with the banderillas—barbed swords... The wounded bull retreated to a spot to the left of the gate through which he had entered, to rest, it seemed. He had found his querencia: a place where he felt safe and was therefore at his most dangerous. (Heard, 4)

During one class, a young man asked, "Do you mean *querencia* is like when I play hockey, and I'm the goalie? As soon as I put on skates and skate to my position, I feel like king of the mountain. I'm in my element!" Yes, that's the idea.

Students write to describe their own querencia, which usually becomes a longer paper combining the idea with a sense of "home". Here are some student samples from the short part of the assignment:

I feel most at home on my beach blanket at the back of my shore house. I walk out the back door onto the warm sand, over the dune and put my blanket down. I close my eyes and feel peaceful and relaxed, smelling the salt water and oranges. The sound of the waves crashing, the storm door slamming, and the seagulls making those noises reminds me of the spot.

Another:

Other than my home, a place I feel like I belong is the racetrack at Englishtown Raceway Park. I can remember being brought to see my father and his dragster and I loved the sound of the loud engines, the smell of cherry alcohol that burned out of the pipes. I have been in the junior league since I was twelve and I love the hot tar beating with heat and hundreds of people gathering to watch.

And one more,

I wake up to the feeling of bumps and deep potholes on the pavement that hasn't been repaved in years on the long drive to my grandparents house. I run out of the car to my grandparents arms, my grandfather tickling me until I can take no more. I smell pasta gravy and meatballs from the kitchen, and I run up the stairs so I can come back down the bannister flying and laughing. This was the same ritual every time we'd visit and in the morning, grandpa would make french toast, soft on the inside, crisp on the outside.

Students immediately can relate to a place, activity, situation, or persons who help them gain a sense of querencia. This assignment becomes meaningful when they begin to include examples to show and support the idea of strengths they possess. This offers foreign students, especially, a chance to express comfort or proficiency with something

which, if they are adjusting to another culture, reminds them of a situation where they felt confident.

Part of being an educator is understanding and addressing student needs, incorporating meaningful materials, adjusting teaching strategies to benefit all learners. Establishing inclusion, developing instructional opportunities for relevance and choice, will contribute to engendering competence and creating community. Furthermore, students who are free to express unique identities in a classroom, learn that there are many lifestyles, traditions, cultural particularities, and so on, but that human beings from any culture still share basic experiences and qualities because they are human beings. The more they realize that each creative mind and voice can make a contribution to the classroom as a whole, the more engaged they become, and a vital multicultural community develops.

During many years of teaching, these ideas have contributed to creating a lively, comfortable classroom atmosphere for all of my students. I offer them as useful possibilities so that all learners can thrive in the changing texture of our world.

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A Critical Report on Introductory Economics at the Community College:

Leveling the Playing Field for Minority Students

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A Critical Report on Introductory Economics at the Community College: Leveling the Playing Field for Minority Students

By Paula Manns

Historical Preface:

Minority students are not doing well in Introductory Economics and I believe this is because the study of "Economic Man" is devoid of color, gender and social class. This paper advocates integrating race, class and gender into the Introductory Economics course. Our classrooms are diverse and the economy is stratified by income, race and ethnicity. Mainstream economic theories and models do not take into account differences in race, class and gender, and by default perpetuate racism and sexism in training future economists. The introductory textbooks do not recognize their readers as multi-racial men and women belonging to influential social and cultural groups. Textbook authors - which are predominately white males - have institutionalized the omission of race, class and gender by ignoring any differences.

Introductory Economic courses feed students into the Economic major and PhD programs. Susan M. Collins. (2000) found for Economics that "despite the sustained increases in the numbers and percentages of minorities earning bachelors degrees and PhD's, the absolute numbers remain very small – only about 36 new (minority) PhD's per year. Minority economists are relatively underrepresented on four-year faculties and in government employment." Minority economists are also rare on community college campuses. If enrollment and retention of minorities is not given serious consideration in the introductory courses, there is little chance these students will have the interest to pursue advance study and more importantly have a say in the direction of future economic thought and policy. Today's economists are leading authorities on U.S. and global economic policy. Quite frankly, not enough of these leading economists are minorities.

Economics is not completely silent on race, class and gender. Thinkers that have tried to make inroads into this area have been labeled "radical" and relegated to the outer perimeter of mainstream economic thought. These pioneers have coined alternative schools of thought within economics. As a result of their hard work, many four year schools now include courses in Political Economy, Feminist Economics and Socioeconomics. These courses represent a small foothold in the monolithic, conservative, predominately white male world of economics. Unfortunately, these courses are rarely taught at

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community colleges and many students are hard pressed to continue Economics after exposure to the introductory courses.

Susan Feiner and Bruce Roberts (edited by Aerni and McGoldrick, 1999) discuss the findings of earlier research completed in 1987 in which 21 major Introductory Economic textbooks were reviewed for references to race and gender. The number of pages that made even a passing reference to economic topics of special interest to women and minorities was remarkably small. My textbook, McConnell, 9th ed, (1987) was sited in the research and included 16 out of 850 pages or 2.05% of the total text. This was high compared to the other 21 textbooks in the study. Despite the early date of the study, little has changed in the introductory textbook.

Feiner and Roberts argue that educators could supplement the text, and textbook authors could simply expand the treatment of women and minorities in the text, "but the minimum focus on gender and race link to the theoretical perspective the texts employ. (They argue) ... that two fundamental characteristics of neoclassical economics unavoidably bias its treatment of gender and race: its philosophical premises, including the positive-normative distinction, and the equilibrium structure of its analysis, which are based on the deriving economic out-comes from the rational character of constrained individual choice."

Interestingly, most introductory textbooks marginalize race and gender in chapter one. In distinguishing between positive and normative statements, students are cautioned to recognize normative statements as being outside the realm of Economics. They are more closely associated with subjective issues of civil responsibility, social justice, and equity, hence, distractions and trade-offs to market efficiency. Traditional textbooks argue normative thinking – namely "should' thinking - will interfere with a student's ability to think like an Economist.

To study Economics one must first buy into the notion that all individuals are the same, with equal freedom and opportunity. Consumers, workers and producers behave individually. They are not influenced by being included or excluded from a race, social class or gender group. Individuals are motivated by their own "rational self-interest" which is recorded in the "market" by the "dollar-vote". To think otherwise is to call into question one's understanding of and appreciation for the efficient market system.

Chapter one in the introductory textbook sets the tone of the course by prematurely biasing the student against normative thinking and consideration of historical and social forces – (namely, cultural, gender, race, ethnicity, family, community and politics). Women and minorities are thus quickly dismissed (ignored, turned white and male, by omission) without serious thought or study.

Students who challenge the silence on diversity and class clearly evident in Introductory Economics are encouraged to explore softer fields of Sociology and Anthropology. This is tragic because in self-selecting themselves out of Economics, these students help to perpetuate the field which is quite comfortable without them. Curiously, the institutionalization of the colorless "individual" in economics stands in stark contrast to advancements in consumer research and market segmentation.

Advocacy Statement and Body of Research

I advocate an eclectic approach to teaching Introductory Economics. An approach that includes supplemental materials on race, class, and gender, as well as exposure to alternative schools of thought such as Political Economy and Feminist Economics. (Significant changes in the textbooks would be preferred.) These changes are necessary for two reasons, (1) Economic pedagogy has not kept pace with the diversity in the classroom and (2) It does not appear that Minority students face a level playing field for retention and successful completion when compared to White students. These changes are being recommended as a result of an analysis of 7673 student records in Introductory Economics over a 16 year period from 1986-2001.

Atlantic Cape Community College Total Student Population for Year 2000
Enrollment based on Ethnicity*

Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percent Totals
White/Non Hispanic	3166	61%
Black	719	14%
Hispanic	405	8%
Asian/Pacific Island	399	8%
Native American	11	<1%
Ethnicity Unknown	406	8%
Nonresident Alien	56	1%
Total	5162	100%

*Robert Kachur, The chart is fairly accurate in the percentage breakdowns by ethnic groups. However, latest 2002 populations indicate in excess of 6,300 students, full and part-time including both traditional (80%) and online courses (20%).

Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC) serves the south New Jersey coastal area surrounding the gambling and hospitality center of Atlantic City. ACCC is open door/open access and is challenged to meet typical educational needs and also a vastly increasing English as Second Language (ESL) student population. Full and part-time students from foreign countries have increased in numbers dramatically over the past ten years. Nevertheless, the distribution of racial and ethnic groups at ACCC is overwhelmingly White with significant Black and Hispanic enrollments. (ACCC 2001:The Carl Perkins Final Report, and ACCC Environment Scan FY2002.) ACCC is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The college is also approved by the N.J. Commission on Higher Education. (www.atlantic.edu)

Grade Distribution in Economics

Total grades given: 7673 (Years 1986 - 2001 - Adjusted)

GRADE	WHITE	BLACK	HISPANIC	ASIAN
A	25%	9%	18%	25.8%
B	25.6%	21.6%	24.3%	26.9%
C	19.7%	22.9%	23.7%	22.5%
D	8%	12.8%	9.6%	7.6%
F	10.3%	14.2%	11.7%	5.7%
N/A, W	11.4%	19.5%	12.7%	11.5%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

These percentages are based on a total of 7673 grades recorded for Macroeconomics and Microeconomics over a 16 year period between 1986 and 2001. A significant difference exists in the grade distribution between racial groups for students enrolled in introductory Economic courses.

Looking at the distribution of grades for White students only, a White student received an "A" 25% of the time and received an "A" or "B" 50% of the time. 18% of the time, a White student received a poor grade or failed the course (D =8%, F= 10.3%).

Alternatively, a Black students received an "A" only 9% of the time and received an "A" or "B" only 31% of the time. For a Black student, 27% of the time he or she received a poor grade or failed the course (D = 12.8%, F= 14.2%). Black students were more likely than other groups -nearly 20% - to

withdraw from the course or receive an N/A grade. (N/A grade is recorded for "not available" or "never attended").

Hispanic students received better grades than Black students but they did not perform as well as White and Asian students. Hispanic students received an "A" 18% of the time, - double that of Black students - and Hispanic students received an "A" or "B" 42% of the time, again higher than Blacks but lower than White and Asian students. For a Hispanic student, 22% of the time he or she received a poor grade or failed the course (D= 9.6% F= 11.7%).

If each of the groups performance over time was equal, we would expect each group to have roughly the same percentage of grades within each category. Clearly White and Asian student performances are comparable, but Black and Hispanic student grades are worse. Black and Hispanic students are less likely than White students to enroll in Economics. When they do enroll, roughly 34% of Black students and 24% of Hispanic students fail or do not complete the course. (For White students and Asian students this is roughly 22% and 16% respectively) When Black and Hispanic students do complete the course, they do not perform as well as White and Asian Students. Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to get "B's" and "C's" where as White and Asian students are more likely to get "A's" and "B's".

Research Summary:

Community Colleges are charged to educate the best and the brightest from the weakest and the poorest of the population. (Hunter Boyland, Director, National Center for Developmental Education, Appalacian State University).

Robin Bartlett says,

"Integrating race and gender issues into the introductory course is important because over 900 colleges and universities offer introductory economics. The content of these courses is heavily dependent upon the content of the introductory texts. Studies have shown that most texts contain very little material dealing with race and gender issues. Those books that do tend to put such issues into special chapters, and often treat them in stereotypical ways. ...While the content of courses and textbooks is largely standardized throughout the country, students have become more diverse. Slightly more than half of all college students are now female, and race and ethnicity are increasing eclectic. Textbooks that deal with economic concepts as if race and gender considerations do not exist, or are not important, have little relevance to a growing population of students" (Bartlett, 1997)

I am not sure incorporating new materials and adopting different teaching strategies will change the outcome of retention and grade distributions for minorities. I do know that if professors of Economics

don't try something, the current trend will not change. This would be unfortunate for our colleges, and it would be unfortunate for the field of Economics as it continues its very myopic course.

The following recommendations should be made essential in Introductory Economics to bring the course into the 21st Century, and make it more appealing to minorities and women. (1) Review the current textbook and select another if it fails to recognize the existence of women and minorities. (2) Evaluate course content and provide supplemental readings that specifically reference race, class, and gender. (3) Evaluate alternative teaching strategies, and (4) Evaluate course requirements and evaluation. I have attempted to provide some direction in each of these areas.

The Textbook

Students need a basic, well-written, student-friendly textbook with graphs and algebra, excluding calculus. Because there doesn't appear to be a textbook that provides students with a fair representation of alternative schools of thought, at a minimum, the text should recognize if not discuss differences between men, women, race and income groups in the text and within graphs and charts. The primary text would cover the basics of classical economics including key theories, principles and models. Courses in Economics at community colleges must continue to be transferable, therefore, it is not recommend that faculty ignore mainstream economics with the result that community college students are ill prepared to compete effectively with other students. I do propose, however, a more eclectic approach which includes the study of alternative schools of thought and also demonstrates an appreciation for the diversity which has made our economy unique.

The Course Content

Students could be introduced to Political Economy, Feminist Economics and/or Socio-economics at the beginning of the semester when Classical Economics is first discussed. For Political Economy, Un-level Playing Field: Understanding Wage Inequality and Discrimination by Albelda, Drago and Shulman is a good choice. This book compares Classical Economic Theory with that of Political Economy and could be used as a primer. Other books are also available. According to Albelda, Drago and Schulman (1997), "Political economy combines several different traditions within economics and politics. Although many

traditions in political economy differ in important respects, they are united in their belief that supply and demand are inadequate tools with which to understand dynamics and outcomes. Instead they focus on forces such as conflict, power and culture."

Political Economy recognizes that behavior is not only individual but also social. Individuals as members of social groups – family, blacks, women, workers, communities – respond to what they value as individuals and what is valued by the groups to which they are members. The term "Political" refers to how political economists perceive important social groups within our society as being related to each other by unequal power and unequal access to resources.

Alternatively, there are many feminist essays and books highlighting the difference between mainstream and feminist economic thought. Below, Strober (1994) talks about the difference between classical and Feminist Economics:

" Feminist challenge several basic disciplinary assumptions: for example, the value of efficiency, the existence of scarcity, the omnipresence of selfishness, the independence of utility functions, the impossibility of interpersonal utility comparisons.... Scarcity, selfishness, and competition are each half of a dichotomy: scarcity/abundance; selfishness/altruism; competition/cooperation. What economic theory has done is largely to relegate the other half of the dichotomy to a place outside of economic analysis. .... the feminist insight about these dichotomies is that by concentrating on scarcity, selfishness, and competition, economics makes it more difficult to redistribute power and economic well-being. Since women are disproportionately represented among the "have-nots", women stand to benefit from a world view that...include abundance, altruism and cooperation. At the same time, economics will have reclaimed a wide range of human behavior currently outside of the disciplinary purview."

The important goal here would be to introduce students to more than one philosophy as a matter of encouraging critical inquiry and dialogue.

Economic statistical data could be used often inside and outside of the classroom. Demographic statistics are published routinely and are available on internet. Often these statistics include national, state and local data. The U.S. Census and SIPP -Survey of Individual Program Participation - sites provide data and analysis reports. Using the textbook and supplemental readings, the professor could explore differences in class and in group assignments.

As an example, A professor might begin by discussing the unemployment rate and its relationship to the business cycle. Okum's Law on the relationship between unemployment and economic growth is usually discussed here. The professor could use this as a opportunity to discuss how unemployment impacts people of different races, ages and professions. While discussing traditional topics about

discouraged workers, part-time workers, and frictional, structural and cyclical unemployment, students could also explore differences between gender, race and income. Students could discuss articles in groups and/or present materials to the class. Alternative theories related to Okum's Law could be introduced. Finally, soliciting personal comments and experiences from students enriches the dialog within the class and challenges students to make a personal investment in the course. By contributing in this way, student begin to connect with the material and invest in their own learning.

Teaching Strategies

One of the criticisms of economists is that they see themselves as natural scientists only and not as social scientists. As natural scientist, economic theories are taught as if they are facts instead of deliberate simplifications attempting to explain reality. In general, theories presented in the textbooks are not questioned as to their validity or inclusiveness. Evidence that supports the theory is pushed to the forefront and evidence that challenges the theory is dismissed casually or ignored. Alternatives theories that call into question mainstream theories are not taken seriously. Economists that question mainstream economics are seldom embraced, but instead labeled "radical".

Another interesting phenomenon that is rarely asserted by clearly observed is that students become more conservative as they take economics. Even liberal students move closer to the right as they are exposed to theories on the surplus of trade and the efficiency of the market system. I don't know of any other major field of study which so completely predisposes a student to think conservatively. This is unfortunate because liberal minded students, many minorities and women, self select themselves out of majoring in Economics because they disagree or are uncomfortable with the politics.

For teaching strategies, the reader is referred to Introducing Race and Gender into Economics, (Bartlett,1997) and the essay, "Feminist Pedagogy: a means for bringing critical thinking and creativity to the economics classroom" by Jean Shackelford. (Valuing. Aerni, McGoldrick, 1999) In Economics, the lecture has been the preferred method of course delivery. Economic professors need to consider integrating more collaborative learning activities and class discussion. Specifically, student groups could discuss supplemental readings and share this information with the class. Within groups, students would be charged to think critically, to compare and contrast readings, to compare theories to evidence, and to evaluate the

perspective taken by the author. Lastly, students could be asked to generate new questions. Because writing about personal experiences tie the student to the material, students might conclude with their personal assessment on how the assignment influenced their thinking.

In one class I had an opportunity to pair groups of women and minorities inside and outside of class. Mature mothers were paired with younger mothers. The groups were voluntary, some mothers were married and others were not. Telephone numbers and email addresses were exchanged and students were encouraged to study together and communicate at least once a week. All of the students who participated stayed in and passed the course. Often the younger mother was stronger academically but was a poor time manager. The mature mother had experience managing work and child rearing and could pass on her experience. Similarly, pairs of Black men and Hispanic men were encouraged to study in groups outside of class. Often these men sat together in class and worked together when groups were formed. Invariably, when minority men worked together, they did not drop out and, they successfully completed the course. I have found that group participation, specifically for minority men, can be crucial to their successfully completing the course. Many bright Black and Hispanic men fail to connect within the course and drop out. A more systematic study on the effectiveness of minority and gender group participation is needed.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Methods:

While grades were used as the tool to measure outcomes in this research, and evaluation methods greatly influence these outcomes, more research needs to be done on how to best level the playing field in the evaluation of minority students in Economics. Perhaps the solution to improving minority retention and success in Economics lies outside of the classroom with programs specifically targeting minorities. While this is a possible solution, resources are limited. My recommendations have been restricted to what can be done within the classroom. Having said that, course requirements must continue to be challenging and rigorous. Writing and speaking in the language of Economics gives students a foundation for future economic inquiry. Students need to be able to analyze data and think critically. Students need to feel comfortable participating in class. Students need to be evaluated based on their knowledge and understanding of the material. In addition to traditional methods of evaluation, I suggest collaborate

essays, group presentations and writing projects. A professor might want to consider non-traditional writing activities such as personal interviews and personal experiences as they relate to the economy.

Conclusion

Minority students are not doing well in Economics. Many stop taking Economics after enrolling in the first introductory course. Something needs to be done to retain minority students within the field. The lack of minority representation means that in the generations to come minorities will continue to be underrepresented on campuses, on economic advisory boards, in government, and in corporations. I argue that if students don't enroll or successfully complete Introductory Economics they will not consider an undergraduate major or graduate degree in Economics.

I hope that reader of this document will evaluate the enrollment, retention and successful completion rate of minorities at your college. If your findings are similar to that found at my campus, I challenge you to incorporate the recommendations made here. Learning to recognize differences, evaluate alternatives, and think critically is important for all students not just to minorities. Evaluating your current courses and making the choice to remedy exclusionary practices and teaching materials demonstrates that your college is cognizant of the diversity that exists, and further, proves that your college is committed to leaving no student behind.

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American Economic Association – American Association for Economic Education. The AEA offers a summer program for minority undergraduates majoring in Economics to increase the number of minority PhD's.
International Association for Feminist Economics
National Economic Association
Society for the Advancement of Socio-economics

Internet Resources

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Expenditure Survey
U.S. Census Bureau
Bureau of Census: SIPP Statistical Briefs (Survey of Income Program and Participation)
CPS Annual Demographic Survey
United State Government, White House Summary Report
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Perceptions of Academic Freedom in Literature Classes: A Case Study at Bergen Community College

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The academic climate in which community college professors teach their literature courses appears to be changing. Exactly what those changes are, how far and how deeply they extend, who stands to gain, and who stands to lose remain to be seen. But one particularly important aspect of this changing climate--an aspect that has been noted in published analyses over the past 10 years--is a consistent claim that increasing limitations are being placed on teachers' academic freedom in the humanities. While I ultimately wish to present evidence from my home institution that does not especially support the claim that the limits of academic freedom are tightening into a noose within the discipline of literature, I would like first to spell out how the problem has been defined and perceived.

No agreement exists as to what "academic freedom" means. Some, in fact, claim that there is not only "more than one meaning" to the phrase, there are "contradictory meanings" to it (Scott 164). The problem is not so much with the term "academic" (although some scholar has no doubt "problematized" the word) but with the term "freedom," whose complexity is reflected in Isaiah Berlin's distinction between "negative" liberty and "positive" liberty: "freedom from interference in one's pursuits . . . [and] freedom for a predefined end" (Menand 5). Nonetheless, Linda Ray Pratt in *The Future of Academic Freedom* offers as good a definition of academic freedom as any: "the free exchange of ideas, in research and teaching" (viii). It is a concept initiated in 1915 by the newly created American Association of University Professors (viii).

On one side of the debate which has arisen in the past 10 years about where the blame is to be placed for the perceived limits on academic freedom are teachers such as

James Daly, Patricia Schall and Rosemary Skeele who, in their work *Protecting the Right to Teach and Learn: Power, Politics, and Public Schools*, issue a "wake-up call for the educationally somnolent" (ix). While acknowledging that "there have been some pretty dismal times for academic freedom in American educational history, when teachers and their students were officially censored and restricted" (104), these authors argue that "today, threats to academic freedom at all levels of education seem at least as serious as they have been at any time since the concept of teacher freedom became established in the twentieth century" (109). These "threats," according to Daly, Schall, and Skeele, are part of a "changing political culture" in America in the 1990s (111) that is increasingly conservative and that increasingly views education with "contempt" (111). This contempt, then, is behind critiques of high school reading lists as "filthy," "pornographic," and "obscene" (141). In their view, a conservative—often religiously conservative—public is behind the increasing limits to academic freedom. The work *Preserving Intellectual Freedom: Fighting Censorship in Our Schools*, edited by Jean Brown, holds a similar position.

On the other side of this debate is the perspective represented by Neil Hamilton in *Zealotry and Academic Freeedom: A Legal and Historical Perspectiv*e. His work, which has also been written within the past ten years, finds fault on the opposite end of the political spectrum. According to Hamilton, it is the radical left, the "politically correct," the multiculturally aware on college campuses that have presented, in the words of former Yale President Benno Schmidt, " 'the most serious problems of freedom of expression in the U.S. today' " (63). Hamilton identifies seven "waves of zealotry, occurring approximately every fifteen to twenty years" in higher education in the United

States (139). The current "wave" arises out of the "fundamentalism of the radical academic left in the late 1980s and early 1990s" and involves a "populist intimidation initiated principally by faculty" (139). By the tactics of "public accusation, social ostracism, investigation, tribunals, threats to employment and disruption of speeches, classes, and administrative functions," Hamilton believes these leftists have created a crisis for those who support academic freedom. According to him, these leftist zealots, "once unleashed" do not just silence their "targets but also silence a vastly greater number of potential speakers who would steer wide of possible punishment" (154).

Putting aside the question of whether academic freedom is really being abrogated, we can see already that there is disagreement about who the enemy of academic freedom really is. Is it the conservative, religious, reactionary right or the radical, "politically correct"-obsessed fundamentalist left? According to some, such as Louis Menand, two issues have exacerbated the conflict:

> the so-called politicization of the humanities—the notion that since all knowledge is political and furthers the interests of some person or some group, teaching and scholarship ought to be undertaken with their political intentions firmly in mind, and specifically with a view to redressing the disparagement or neglect of subordinate groups (4)

and

> epistemological relativism—the notion that judgments and values cannot be objective or universal, and that ideals like 'disinterestedness,' 'reason,' and 'truth' are insupportable abstractions which we would be better off

> abandoning in favor of more frankly relational and historicist terms like 'perspective,' 'understanding,' and 'interpretation.' (4)

A post-structuralist theorist such as Michel Foucault, for example, would most likely argue that there is no such thing as "academic freedom." If not, we may then ask the question posed by Richard Rorty: "How in good political conscience could anyone [with the knowledge that no truth is objective] who has the resources to shape the very construction of reality—say, by changing the curriculum or influencing the selection of teachers or regulating the discourse of students about gender, ethnicity, or other sensitive issues—pass up such an opportunity"? (Haskell 73). Our other option, if we follow Stanley Fish's advice, is to ignore principle entirely and succumb to total subjectivity: "the only question is the political one of which speech is going to be chilled" (qtd. In Haskell 79). Further complications arise when "First Amendment rights" are brought up as well as the issues of "hate speech," and the varieties of individual "speech codes" at different universities. Add to this the ever-present, yet frequently unsubstantiated, perception among professors that lawsuits will be filed at will by students against professors for any number of offenses.

It is in this somewhat murky climate that I conducted my survey about self-censorship in the choosing of literature readings for literature classes at Bergen Community College. The results of this survey constitute the eponymous "case study." My focus differed significantly from the published literature I just discussed in that I concentrated in the survey less on what a professor says in his/her own words in class and more on what the texts that he/she teaches say—texts that are discussed and often read aloud in class. In my survey, I set out to determine whether my respondents—all seven

of whom are either tenured or tenure-track full-time faculty members--felt any pressures exerted on their selections of course readings, either from the conservative right or from "politically correctness." But I also wanted to find out how important the *self*-censorship process was in selecting required readings for their courses. Thus, the survey attempted to address the following question: To what degree are literature professors' reading choices determined by so-called "outside" factors such as perceived community or political pressures and how much by so-called "internal" factors such as individual preference? No self-respecting literature professor really buys the absolute separation of the "inside" and the "outside" human self, but the division nonetheless serves at least a partially useful category in this instance. One additional remark: while seven completed surveys may seem paltry, it still does constitute a majority of those who teach literature at Bergen Community College. A copy of the survey is attached as Appendix A.

An important distinction to explore in this study is the degree to which literary style/form/diction operates as a factor in self-censorship and the degree to which literary content operates in the same process. Survey questions 1 and 2 were directed toward this distinction. It appeared to respondents that content presented a slightly more delicate matter than word choice. Only one respondent indicated that he/she would not select a text because of certain obscene vocabulary words in it. One respondent wrote that "the first page of *The Color Purple* creates a challenge if I read parts out loud," but did not indicate that this was enough to disqualify the text from a reading list. At the same time, several respondents indicated that they would not present certain subject matter to a class. One wrote "I might not want to deal with homosexuality in an immature composition class," while a less hesitant respondent wrote that he/she "would not use texts that

embrace misogyny, racism, classism," since "there is enough great literature that does not offend the reader in this way to choose from." This respondent added that he/she would not teach V.S. Naipaul for these reasons. Another respondent indicated that he/she would not "teach Ezra Pound, because I'm offended by his obnoxious anti-Semitism." The same respondent also wrote that "these days I won't teach Baraka either," in reference to the New Jersey Poet Laureate's recent controversial poem about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. In these two responses, then, the disqualifying factor is an author's generally known character rather than his/her particular work or particular vocabulary.

Most respondents noted some student complaints about literary materials introduced in class, although the complaints appeared not to progress beyond the instructor. (In fact, one respondent identified himself as the divisional Dean and wrote that during his time in office he had not heard a single complaint on the basis of offensive readings in literature classes.) One respondent wrote that "one student strongly objected to Sapphire's *Push*. He felt students came to college to learn to express themselves 'properly' and not to be exposed to 'this filth.' " This respondent also mentioned that "one student was offended by lesbian undertones in Fannie Flagg's *Fried Green Tomatoes*." Another respondent identified *The Color Purple, Love in the Time of Cholera* and *The Lover* as texts students complained about, primarily because of subject matter ("rape, incest" in *The Color Purple*, "geriatric love" in *Love in the Time of Cholera*, and "explicit sex" in *The Lover*.) Another respondent mentioned that an "adult student" once "complained about the 'ugliness' depicted in 'The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson, complaining that it was too dark a view of humanity." This appears more a

philosophical objection than an objection based on obscenity, violence, or pornography, but it is interesting to note that the two can, at times, overlap. One respondent, who indicated that he had also taught in Italy, called attention to cultural factors at work in student offense. "Americans are much more offended by sex than violence," he wrote, "in Italy, the opposite was true. Violence offended."

Another part of the survey involved questions about perceived "comfort" in the classroom, both of students and of instructors. Questions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 in the survey were directed towards this issue. Respondents differed on the importance of "student comfort." One wrote that "I certainly would not want to shock or upset a student"; and another that "one of my teaching goals is to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to students' free self-expression," preferring "students to feel comfortable to voice their ideas/interpretations even if they contradict mine." But a different respondent wrote that student "comfort doesn't concern me" and student comfort is "not so important." Some respondents defined "student comfort" in negative terms, such as "not being offended by a work or stuff in the work," or "themes that don't challenge them to expend their narrow sensibilities." A number of respondents indicated that a certain level of discomfort is often necessary for learning: "making them uneasy is at times a goal."

"Instructor comfort" in the classroom generally referred to the ability to speak freely during a class session to most respondents, but it had as much to do with academic preparation as with subject matter or vocabulary being discussed. One respondent turned the issue back on the class, writing that "I do get uncomfortable at some things students voice." "I am always comfortable," one respondent wrote; "however, sometimes reading aloud makes me turn red." Another wrote that his/her comfort means "that I don't shrink

away from the topic's exploration and that I feel competent to explore the reading in a sensitive and constructive way." And "possessing adequate background information"

Other factors may figure into an instructor's self-censorship process. The number of years that participants have taught literature at the college level may affect the self-censorship process, although the results of my survey were inconclusive on that factor. Instructors may be more careful about text selection prior to the award of tenure, for example. Participants' experience teaching at other institutions—whether four-year colleges or other community colleges—may affect an instructor's proneness to self-censorship, although no conclusions could really be drawn based on responses. (Questions 13 and 14 were designated for this topic.)

While the effect on perceived academic freedom of the specific literature courses taught could not be determined by my survey, I think this issue is worth a brief comment. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that instructors are especially self-censorious in literature courses that attract a large international student population, courses such as World Lit I, World Lit II, or International Lit. At the same time, based again on anecdotal evidence, American Lit courses, especially American Lit II, are almost infamous for violent and obscenity-laced readings from authors such as Allen Ginsberg and Norman Mailer. Conversations with colleagues reveal a commonly held belief that many international students—the more common of which at Bergen Community College are Korean and Latino/a—are from very traditional family backgrounds. Daughters, in particular, are often sheltered and isolated much more than their American contemporaries. For this reason, my colleagues attest, they are warier of discussing certain topics such as incest, or to present graphic sexual content. They are also more

hesitant to introduce "improper" English to students who are already struggling with the English language. A related question may be whether instructors tend to be more or less self-censorious in classes that are perceived by them to be ideologically (or racially or ethnically) diverse? Another aspect of this topic is that certain topic areas, such as Women's Studies, Gay/Lesbian or African-American literature may pose more/fewer or otherwise different problems from others for instructors' concerns about student comfort.

In assessing the overall results of my survey, I would comment that, in general, there is not a high level of fear among literature professors that there will be dire consequences for them if they teach what is uncritically perceived to be offensive, obscene, pornographic, violent, and/or cynical literature to their classes at Bergen Community College. Individual preference rather than group conformity seems to be the guiding principle in choosing texts at this time. It is likely that the text's words being at least once removed from the professor's creates less of an immediate problem for professors than if they were to present material themselves (say, in a creative writing course) that involved taboo subjects.

Two remarks on the surveys, however, struck me as troubling. One respondent reported the following occurrence when, as part of Bergen Community College's "Literary Arts Series" she prompted the "college-wide reading of Sapphire's *Push*." She noted that "at least three faculty members in our Department [English] felt the language of *Push* was inappropriate in a college reading. One of them referred to it as 'the language of the lower class.' " These faculty members circulated a letter at the college condemning the novel. But while the reaction is unfortunate, these faculty members were exercising their democratic right to express dissent. A second, more ominous incident is

described by another respondent. He writes that the bookstore refused to order Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* when he put it on his reading list some years ago. This suggests a curtailing of academic freedom on a completely different level.

It is likely that the discipline of literature poses a unique problem of academic freedom in relation to subject matter and/or vocabulary. Literature can address deeply personal and/or psychically troubling themes. So-called "outsiders" frequently take literature classes, increasing the probability of offense and/or complaint. Similarly, non-specialists also frequently read literature on their own, whereas it is less likely that such "outsiders" take science courses (unless required) and almost unheard of that the same population reads science texts in their spare time. Further, scientific discourse, in its emphasis on objectivity, rarely includes superficially offensive vocabulary, though it may, of course, present hidden biases and judgments.

It is also likely that the community college presents a distinct manifestation of the academic freedom problem. The two-year college, the "junior college," has always had a mission that is closer to that of high schools than that of four-year institutions. In fact, many community college professors in all fields have noted recently the increasing pressure to assume the responsibility of teaching behaviors that formerly were taught at the high school level, behaviors such as socialization skills, study skills, self-awareness, and personal responsibility. Bergen Community College, for example, has added an "Introduction to College" course that teaches subjects such as study skills and appropriate classroom behavior. Most respondents of the survey indicated an awareness of literary censorship at the high school level. It may thus not be wrong to assume that if such

censorship were to affect colleges, then community colleges would be the first to feel that pressure.

Much of the faculty and the student population of the two-year college tend to be, for lack of a better term, provincial. While many have what they would consider street smarts, worldliness is often lacking. At Bergen Community College, for example, at least one Dean has expressed shock that studio art classes use nude models. The provincial mentality of the faculty, as a general trend, is due to the fact that many faculty members—the older generation in particular--come out of high school teaching backgrounds and graduate degrees in Education. The provincial mentality of the students is due to any number of factors, from traditional family background to poverty to youth. In general, the community college, through its very mission as well as its open admissions institution, is less removed from the community at large than selective institutions are. As such, the risks to academic freedom may in fact be greater than at elite colleges. After all, the original concept of academic freedom protected professors to express "ideas 'distasteful'; to the larger community" (Pratt viii). At the same time, however, Louis Menand's assertion that "in the case of the academic professional, interference by outside political or economic interests is considered repugnant to a unique degree, and elaborate measures are taken to insulate the university teacher and researcher from them" (Menand 8) is ironically less valid in the case of the community college where, it often appears, faculty are deliciously entertained by the interventions of "inexpert" local and state governance.

Thus it would appear that there is not yet cause for extreme agitation on the issue of the perceived narrowing of academic freedoms for college professors. Nonetheless, as

a general rule, we should probably stay wary of anyone "full of passionate intensity," as Yeats has so aptly warned us. Thus, I believe it may not be time to sound the alarm, but it is rarely foolish to stay vigilant.

One last comment: we must also keep in mind that academic freedom also applies to students, not just to faculty. A student felt it well within his academic freedom to write in a research paper several weeks ago that it was his personal view that non-Muslims should either convert or be executed. I still wonder how I should have responded to that comment. As it was, I took the cowardly way out and did nothing. To some, though, taking action might be telephoning the FBI. At the same time, I would rather not be pressured to say that this opinion is as valid as any other on the topic, although there may be some in the multicultural camp who would argue that I should.

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APPENDIX A

Princeton Mid-Career Fellowship Program Survey – Sarah Markgraf

Thank you again for taking the time to fill out this survey. Please skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

1. Are there specific words/phrases that would deter you from assigning a particular literary text? If so, please list any texts that you have consciously NOT assigned for this reason.

2. Is there any particular subject matter that would deter you from assigning a literary reading? If so, please identify this subject matter.

3. Have students in your classes ever complained about a required reading for reasons related to either specific words/phrases or to the reading's content (i.e., not its level of difficulty)? If so, please identify any specific texts that were mentioned by students.

4. Please identify any titles of literary works that created an uncomfortable environment in a particular class because of certain words/phrases.

5. If students have complained about a reading because of language or content, did the complaints go beyond you to either the Department Chair, the Divisional Dean or higher?

6.As you select required readings for literature classes, how important is student "comfort" to you?

7. How would you define "student comfort"?

8. How important is it to you that you be "comfortable" in your literature class discussions?

9. What does the term "comfortable" mean to you in this context?

10. Are you aware of cases of literary texts being removed from reading lists in literature classes at the high school level? If so, please describe any specifics you can recall hearing about.

11. Are you aware of any cases of censorship at the community college level? Again, if so, please describe any specifics you can recall.

12. Are you aware of any cases of censorship at the four-year college level? Again, if so, please describe any specifics you can recall.

13. If you have taught literature at institutions other than Bergen Community College, do you feel that your reading selections were markedly different at these other institutions?

14. If so, how were the readings different?

15. Please list the literature classes you have taught (i.e. American Literature, World Literature).

16. How many years have you been teaching literature?

Encouraging Disagreement and Challenge among Community College Students: The Intersection of Critical Consciousness and Multiculturalism

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HIS 520: Colloquium in Community College Teaching

Princeton University Mid-Career Fellowship Program (MCFP)

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Encouraging Disagreement and Challenge among Community College Students:

The Intersection of Critical Consciousness and Multiculturalism

I. An Overview of Interdisciplinary Studies at Raritan Valley Community College

Over the years Raritan Valley Community College has made a concerted effort to offer students a variety of opportunities to expand their awareness of international and cross-cultural issues, most notably with the inclusion of interdisciplinary courses such as Humanities I and II Quest for Self, Society and Nature, Global Patterns of Racism: In Literary, Historical, and Anthropological Perspectives, and Global Visions Interdisciplinary Studies: Anthropological/Humanities Perspectives.[1] To strengthen intercultural understanding and to promote responsible citizenship and global awareness, the college has also established the Institute for Holocaust and Genocide Studies Resource Center and the Paul Robeson Institute for Ethics, Leadership and Social Justice. These institutes attest to a college environment that puts a strong emphasis on ethics and social justice as well as on cross-cultural sensitivity. Moreover, Raritan has enunciated a commitment to the creation of "learners who value intellectual achievement, scholarship, diversity of thought, and service to the community" ("Mission Statement"). That the implementation of this goal involves an intercultural and interdisciplinary approach to critical thinking is evident from the latest "Statement of General Education Goals" ratified by the College Forum on May 6, 2003.

The first requirement mentioned in the document is that students are expected to "produce works that reflect critical and creative thought." It also states: "Critical thinking includes the ability to gather make sense of information, to make connections between ideas, and to use these

connections to generate new meanings" (1). Further, the document advocates a broad-based approach in which divisions between disciplines are acknowledged only to be elided (and recognized as arbitrary) as the students "develop an interdisciplinary perspective as a means of understanding issues, recognizing that the boundaries between disciplines are artificial" (1).

II. A Critical Approach to Multicultural Literature: "Colonialism and Literature"

Clearly, the aforementioned requirements and the General Education document as a whole point to a curriculum that challenges students to reexamine their beliefs and attitudes about their place in the world while enhancing their understanding of other cultures. A vital part of this effort must be the development of courses and pedagogies that foster a critical approach to multiculturalism, one that goes beyond identity politics and celebration of ethnic and cultural identities. This alternative approach to cross-cultural work is inextricably linked to historical, social and national context but also involves transnational movements and identities. It is one that will help students understand the "power and politics influencing the construction of the Self and the Other" (Ryuko 84), an underlying concern of much of Critical Race Theory as well as of contemporary literary criticism and composition theory.[2]

" Colonialism and Literature: From Domination to Liberation," the course I am herewith proposing, involves the interrelation between identity (personal and social, national and global), on the one hand, and the discourses of colonialism and postcolonialism, on the other. Edward Said's comment on the enormity of decolonization since 1945 suggests the need for such a course: "The emergence of almost a hundred new decolonized post-colonial states after 1945 is not a neutral fact, but one to which, in discussions of it, scholars, historians, activists have been either for or against" (194). This course will involve an analysis of the worldwide impact that colonialism as a political

and cultural system has had on writers, both Western and non-Western.[3] Similar to "Global Patterns of Racism," the course I am proposing will deal with oppression and the role of social forces in constructing identity. Like "Global Patterns," it will also enhance students' understanding of racism and offer proactive responses to it. However, by privileging colonization and decolonization (and their legacies) the new course will also provide students with an in-depth look at the struggles of peoples worldwide against domination and exploitation. Racism as well as nativism and nationalism will be discussed in relation to nationhood and national and personal liberation.

Such a course promises to go a long way toward helping students theorize and practice critical, rather than dependent literacy, as it presents them with the opportunity to examine, in a systematic and sustained manner, complex relationships between discourse and power, language and identity, nationalism and liberation. Students, most of whom will be sophomores or second-semester freshmen, will be asked to keep journals in which they explore the relevance of texts treated in class to their roles as students, and to institutional and personal concerns. The class is aimed at helping them to understand the notion of *accommodation*, defined by Geoffrey Chase, echoing Henry Giroux, as the "process by which students learn to accept conventions without necessarily questioning how those conventions privilege some forms of knowledge at the expense of others" (14). This same kind of "privileging" will be examined in the authors studied in "Colonialism and Literature," helping students see how language can be a powerful tool in what Roz Ivanič calls the "discoursal construction of identity."[4] Thus, from discussing the implicit assumptions about power and empire embodied in colonialist texts, students will come to a greater understanding of the importance of questioning authority. By making visible what Foucault calls subjugated forms of knowledge," students will discover more about the ways in which colonial and

post-colonial literature legitimate and delegitimate the cultures and ideas of the colonized. Students will be asked to discern patterns in literary representations of colonialism and analyses of it. Subtopics will include the construction of discourses of power and repression, the question of "literariness" and artistic standards, and the relationship between "otherness" to cultural and artistic values. Texts embodying colonialist and postcolonialist themes will be from various time periods and countries and will include fiction, essays, autobiography, poems as well as testimonies and historical documents.

Encouraging disagreement and challenge is both an essential pedagogical approach as well as goal for this new course. Moreover, the overarching focus of the course is to provide students with an appreciative understanding of colonial and post-colonial literature from aesthetic, political and historical viewpoints. Such a focus involves the critical analysis of literary works in relation to the political and cultural domination of countries from various time periods and parts of the world. Students will be examining the extent to which various literary representations involving colonialism are defined-- but not determined-- by power relations involving colonizer and colonized or by other aspects of the legacy of colonialism. Students need to see that just as important as the similarities between writers' responses to colonialism are the differences. Patricia Bizzell's comment about the value of contradictions, within ourselves as well as between ourselves and others is instructive here:

> If contradiction has heuristic value, then we can regard each individual as a unique resource for originating what can become collective political action for the transformation of inequalities. I would venture to say that each individual embodies a unique collection of interests, the product of his or her unique

> combination of life experiences. Each collection of interests raises possibilities for generating that dialectic of conflicting positions from which arises the dynamic for change. [. . .] Therefore, we should accustom ourselves to dealing with contradictions, instead of seeking a theory or pedagogy that appears to abrogate them. (235)

III. Basic Course Information: Title, Prerequisite, Place in Curriculum

A. Title

Choosing a title for this course has been difficult for several reasons, but primarily because of terms related to the field of postcolonial studies. I entitled the course "Colonialism and Literature" rather than "Postcolonialist Literature" or "Colonialist and Postcolonialist Literature" because the latter two titles seemed somewhat confusing, especially since the course is to be offered for students at the freshmen and sophomore levels. For many theorists, "postcolonialist" (or "postcolonial") encompasses both the period of colonization as well as the periods following it, including those of decolonization and nationalization. Thus, the term "postcolonialist" (or "postcolonial") for many theorists can involve a critique of the institution of colonization rather than the time period following independence.[5] On the other hand, some critics use the term "colonialist literature" to refer to the representation of a world that has "not (yet) been domesticated by European signification or codified by its ideology" and which is therefore "seen as 'uncontrollable, chaotic, unattainable, and ultimately evil" (JanMohamed 83). Moreover, I added the subtitle, "From Domination to Liberation," 1) to suggest two central themes in the literature, ones which would, hopefully, engage the attention of potential students for the course 2) to evoke the idea of a contextualized approach to literature dealing with significant historical phenomena 3) to attract

students who might not be familiar with the idea of colonialism except in terms of the "influence" of one country's cultures on another's 4) to suggest a pedagogical approach which fosters disagreement and challenge in the class.

B. Prerequisite; Place in Curriculum

This course will be open to any student who has successfully completed English I (the first semester of freshman composition) and will be a free 3-credit-hour elective that will serve as a General Education Requirement in the area of Humanities. It will transfer easily to four-year institutions that have an equivalent course in place. Many colleges already have courses dealing with thematic and historical approaches to world literature.

IV. Catalog Description (Proposed Wording):

ENGL 208 Colonialism and Literature: From Domination to Liberation

What does culture mean under colonialism? In this course we will examine the diverse ways in which Western and non-Western writers have responded to colonization and its legacies. We will look at how language has been used to defame as well as to reclaim and rename. Drawing on an interdisciplinary approach, the course will involve representations of imperial culture in essays, fiction, poetry, drama, and historical narratives. The course will treat a wide range of writers from the nearly one hundred new decolonized post-colonial nations that were formed since 1945. This will include writers such as C.L.R. James, Chinua Achebe, Bessie Head, and Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'O. It will also include writers from before 1945 such as Rudyard Kipling and Thomas Carlyle.

V. Thematic Concerns for Proposed Course

By placing texts from the colonizing culture in dialogue with those from the colonized culture, we will examine the influences of cultures on national and individual identities. Below are a few of the issues we will be interrogating throughout the course:

1. the stereotypes and distortions embodied in literature by writers of colonizing cultures
2. the wide range of responses to "otherness," both in literature by writers from colonized cultures and by those of the colonizing ones
3. the effort of the colonized to resist the oppression of the colonizing culture
4. the ways in which nationality, culture and identity are problematized because of colonialism
5. the mingling of languages and cultures as a result of colonization
6. the attempts by the colonized people to reclaim their histories and traditions
7. assimilation and resistance

VI. The Challenge of a Postcolonial Approach to Multiculturalism

I feel strongly that Literature and Colonialism will provide students with the opportunity to learn a great deal more about important literary representations of historical phenomena. By analyzing the works of both colonizing and colonized cultures in relation to each other, students will gain a greater appreciative understanding both of the aesthetic and social value of the works and of the complexities of the issues and struggles they embody. Juxtaposing works by writers like Behn,, Carlyle, Gide, and Malraux next to those by writers like Achebe, Darwish, Soyinka and Head can generate multiple perspectives on representation and also lead students to new insights into the complex nature of their own identities, as students and members of the larger community.

NOTES

[1] In addition to the aforementioned courses, which are designated as team-taught, there have also been other interdisciplinary courses taught at times (or on a regular basis) at Raritan by just one instructor, in each case by someone from the English Department. These include Law and Literature, Psychology and Literature, The History and Literature of Vietnam War, Women in Literature, English I and II: Holocaust Emphasis, and Masculinity in Literature. Due to budgetary concerns, fewer team-taught courses have been given at the college over the past three years, which has meant that the courses taught by just one instructor have been available to students on a more regular basis than the team-taught ones.

[2] Patricia Bizzell, for example, discusses the need for schemes for cultural literacy that enable students to see the social elements that affect one's sense of identity. At the same time, she insists on the importance of making students aware of the "implicit curriculum," what Basil Bernstein calls the "elaborated codes" embodied in the culture of the college. As Bizzell writes: "It is true that academic knowledge, with its institutionalized power, exerts hegemony over other ways of knowing. We need to reexamine the knowledge the academy disestablishes as well as that which it endorses. But in order to approach this hegemony critically, we must understand how it works, and for understanding we need to be initiated into the academic discourse community, though we may intend eventually to critique the forms of knowledge which that community offers us" (125-126).

Geoffrey Chase, like Bizzell, advocates an approach to composition studies that serves to "foreground the relationships between discourse conventions, students' interactions with those

conventions, and our interactions with students to determine how those relationships are tied to concepts of resistance and accommodation" (21). Similar to Bizzell, he also emphasizes the importance of pedagogical practices that "encourage students to affirm and analyze their own experiences and histories, not without question, but as starting points for connecting with the wider culture and society" (21).

Finally, Sarah Benesch is another theorist who insists on the importance of historicizing (and localizing) literacy and intellectual work. In Critical English for Academic Purposes: Theory, Politics, and Practice, she draws on Michel Foucault to theorize resistance as the "explicit reckoning of power relations" (57). Further, while acknowledging her great debt to Paulo Freire's dialogic pedagogy, she nevertheless criticizes him for taking an approach that "dichotomizes oppression, allowing for only two possibilities: oppressor or oppressed. This formulation leaves out what Weiler calls 'the specificity of peoples' lives,' including ways that they can be oppressed in one situation and privileged in another" (57). Thus, Benesch in her work in composition theory (and ESL pedagogy) has articulated a major trope in much of recent postcolonialist criticism: the danger of universalizing oppression.

[3] Chris Hedges' article on the origin and impact of postcolonial studies demonstrates how such courses have become important additions in the offerings of English and comparative literature departments in U.S. colleges across the country. In discussing the emergence of the field of postcolonial studies in the 1980s, he cites one of its seminal texts, Orientalism, by Edward Said, a professor of English and comparative literature at Columbia University. He then states: "Surprisingly, the primary home for postcolonial studies was not political science, but literature. One of the most important essays of the postcolonial movement was 'Three Women's Texts and a

Critique of Imperialism,' which Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, a professor in the English and comparative literature department at Columbia University, wrote in 1984" (B9). Additionally, many college English departments offer postcolonial literature courses designed for undergraduate students, including ones open to freshmen and sophomores.

[4] Ivanič explains that Critical Language Awareness (CLA), a pedagogy that her approach to literacy and composition studies incorporates, sees language "not as a 'rich tapestry' of neutral values, but as a site for struggle" (117). In her comments about EAP (English for Academic Purposes-- courses in college-level freshman English composition for non-native speakers of English) Benesch endorses Ivanič's view of literacy: "Critical EAP assumes that current conditions should be interrogated in the interests of greater equity and democratic participation in and out of educational institutions. It encourages students to see their options in particular situations rather than assuming they must fulfill expectations. After considering options, they may choose to carry out demands or challenge them" (Critical English 64).

[5] The following comment by Homi K. Babba suggests that texts written during colonial domination may serve as the basis for postcolonial theory: "Postcolonial perspectives emerge from colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of east and west, north and south" (437). Therefore the term "postcolonial" (or "postcolonialist") does not relate solely to texts or events after decolonization.

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